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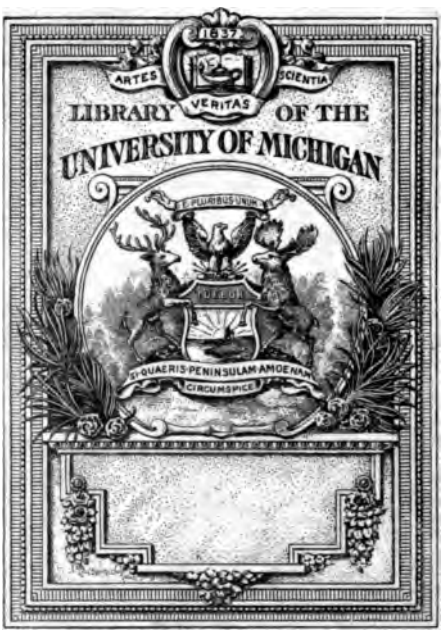
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(AUTHORISED EDITION),

15925

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SEVENTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

63 VICTORIÆ.

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Colonial Bank Bill—Brought from the Commons; Read First Time; and referred to the Examiners 3

Dublin Corporation Bill and Clontarf Urban District Council Bill—Commons Message considered (according to order).

The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Morley) 3

Moved, That this House do concur in the following resolution communicated by the Commons, viz., "That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons" (*The Chairman of Committees*); agreed to; and a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith 4

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RETURNS SHOWING:—1. Expenditure from the grant for public education in England and Wales in the year 1899, and expenditure from 1839 to 1899; 2. Number of public elementary day schools on the Annual Grant List on August 31st, 1899; accommodation, number of scholars, and average attendance in those schools; 3. Detailed statistics of inspected schools, 1898–99: Public elementary day schools, evening continuation schools, and certified efficient schools; accommodation, number of scholars, average attendance, teachers employed, particulars of grant earned, income, expenditure, etc.; 4. Summary tables of educational statistics; and 5. Number of School Boards under various heads of population 4

TREATY SERIES, 1900—No. 7. Convention and Declaration between the United Kingdom of Germany for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions; signed at London, November 14th, 1899 (ratifications exchanged at London and Berlin, February 16th, 1900); No. 8. Convention between the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States of America for the adjustment of questions relating to Samoa; signed at Washington, 2nd December, 1899 (ratifications exchanged at London, Berlin, and Washington, 16th February, 1900; No. 9. Treaty between the United Kingdom and the Republic of San Marino for the mutual extradition of fugitive criminals; signed at Florence, 16th October, 1900 (ratifications exchanged at Rome, December 5th, 1899) 5

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TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES—No. 2390. Italy (1898 and 1899). Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896—Order, dated the 14th of March, 1900, relating to the conveyance of animals by the Steamship "Aldworth." Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

NEW BILL.

Prevention of Corruption Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to check corruption—Was presented by the Lord Russell of Killowen; read First Time; and to be printed. (No. 35) 5

Money Lending Bill [H.L.] [THIRD READING]—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read for the Third Time."—(*The Lord James of Hereford.*)

The Earl of Wemyss 5

On Question, agreed to; Bill read the Third Time (according to order); an Amendment made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Youthful Offenders Bill [H.L.]—Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read the Third Time on Tuesday next 7

Census (Great Britain) Bill—Read the Second Time (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House To-morrow 7

MUNICIPAL TRADING—PROPOSED JOINT COMMITTEE.

DISCUSSION:—

The Earl of Morley ... 8
The Earl of Wemyss ... 8
The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) ... 9

House adjourned at a quarter before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1900

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE) MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Metropolitan Common Scheme (Petersham) Provisional Order Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a Second Time To-morrow 9

Hamilton Burgh Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the Third Time 10

London Water (Purchase) Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."

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DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Stuart (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 10
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 10
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 10
Mr. Stuart.. 11
Mr. Boulnois (Marylebone, E.) 11
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 11
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 12
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 12
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 12
Mr. Stuart 12
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) ... 13
Mr. John Redmond 13
Mr. Chaplin 14
Mr. Stuart 14
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 14
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 14
Mr. John Redmond 15
The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 15

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Stuart.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea) ... 17
Col. Lockwood (Essex, Epping) 18
Sir Frederic Dixon-Hartland (Middlesex, Uxbridge) 18
Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.) 18
Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 19
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 20
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) ... 22
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) ... 23
Sir W. Hart-Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 23

Question put, and agreed to. Debate adjourned till Thursday next.

Central London Railway Bill—"To amend The Central London Railway Act, 1891, with reference to cheap fares for labouring classes," read the First Time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 25

Shannon Water and Electric Power Bill—Ordered, That the Shannon Water and Electric Power Bill be committed to the Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection for the Consideration of other Private Bills relating to electric power.—(*Lord Balcarres*) 25

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1.)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Basingstoke, Erdington, Farnham, Felixstowe and Walton, Leek, Littleborough, Maryport, Nantwich, Ormskirk, and Penrith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury 25

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2.)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brierley Hill, Cleethorpes-with-Thrunscoe, Elland, Exmouth, Newark, Penzance, Prestwich, Redcar, Sowerby Bridge, and Whitefield, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury 25

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) **Bill**—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Basingstoke, Erdington, Farnham, Felixstowe and Walton, Leek, Littleborough, Maryport, Nantwich, Ormskirk, and Penrith," presented, and read the First Time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 137) 25

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Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brierley Hill, Cleethorpes-with-Thrunscoe, Elland, Exmouth, Newark, Penzance, Prestwich, Redcar, Sowerby Bridge, and Whitefield," presented, and read the First Time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 138) 26

PETITIONS.

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table 26

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table 26

Midwives Bill—Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 26

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions, in favour, from King's Lynn; Chichester, Old Walsoken; West Walton; Wisbech (two); and Chatteris; to lie upon the Table 26

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions, in favour, from Rochdale; Salford; Miles Platting; Trawden; Glasgow; London; Upper Norwood; Croydon (two); and Wanstead; to lie upon the Table 26

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions, in favour, from London and Rochdale (two); to lie upon the Table 27

Teinds (Scotland) Bill—Petition of the United Presbyterian Synod, against; to lie upon the Table 27

Town Councils (Scotland) Bill—Petitions, in favour, from Borrowstounness and Pollokshaws; to lie upon the Table 27

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL WORKS ACTS, 1895, 1896, AND 1897—Account presented, showing the amount of money issued out of the Consolidated Fund; the amount and nature of the securities created in respect thereof; the amount of the surplus of income over expenditure for the financial year ended 31st March, 1896, and the amount of money expended in pursuance of the Acts during the year ended the 31st March, 1899, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereof [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 108]... 27

TREATY SERIES (No. 7, 1900)—Copy presented of Convention and Declaration between the United Kingdom and Germany for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions. Signed at London, 14th December, 1899. Ratifications exchanged at London and Berlin, 16th February, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 27

TREATY SERIES (No. 8, 1900)—Copy presented of Convention between the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States of America, for the adjustment of questions relating to Samoa. Signed at Washington, 2nd December, 1899. Ratifications exchanged at London, Berlin, and Washington, 16th February, 1990 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 27

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TREATY SERIES (No. 9, 1900)—Copy presented of Treaty between the United Kingdom and the Republic of San Remo for the mutual extradition of fugitive criminals. Signed at Florence, 16th October, 1899. Ratifications exchanged at Rome, 5th December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 28

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copy presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2390 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 28

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House—

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR—Copy of Abstract of the General Annual Account for the year ending 26th July, 1899 [by Act] 28

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 28

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating to the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham." Palatine Court of Durham Bill. [*Lords.*]

And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to further amend the Acts relating to the Harbour of Dundee; and for other purposes. [Dundee Harbour Bill, H.L.] 28

Dundee Harbour Bill [H.L.]—Read the First Time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 28

London County Tramways (No. 2) Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 28

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—LORD METHUEN, GENERAL WAUCHOPE, AND COLONEL GOUGH—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 29

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENT—LORD METHUEN'S DESPATCHES—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 29

SIEGE OF KIMBERLEY—MR. RHODES AND COLONEL KEKEWICH—Question, Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion); Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 31

PRIVATE PROPERTY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLICS—Question, Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 31

WIRE NIPPERS—Questions, Sir Lewis M'Iver (Edinburgh, W.) and General Russell (Cheltenham); Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, W.) 31

BOOTS FOR THE TROOPS—Question, General Russell; Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 32

QUICK-FIRING GUNS—Question, Mr. Platt-Higgins (Salford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 32

PROPOSED WAR RECORD COINAGE—Question, Mr. Aird (Paddington N.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 33

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WAR FUNDS—PROVISION FOR RELATIVES OF INDIAN CAMP FOLLOWERS—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 33

PRESS CENSORSHIP—SUPPRESSED CABLEGRAMS—Question, Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 34

BRITISH WOUNDED PRISONERS—Question, Mr Lees Knowles (Salford, W.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 34

CONDUCT OF GERMAN SAILORS at PORTSMOUTH—Question, Mr. Nicol (Argyll); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Macartney, Antrim, S.) ... 34

RESERVE AND MILITIA OFFICERS' ALLOWANCES—Questions, Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.) and Col. M'Calmont (Antrim, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 35

CADET BATTALIONS—PROPOSED CAPITATION GRANT—Question, Mr. Warr (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 35

SANDHURST CADETS' COMMISSIONS—Question, Sir Charles Cayzer (Barrow-in-Furness); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 36

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF AUXILIARY FORCES—Question, Col. Welby (Taunton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 36

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS—Questions, Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.), Mr. Stuart-Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam); Answers, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 37

MILITIA MEDICAL STAFF CORPS' PAY—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell (Wigton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 38

SOUTH CORK MILITIA—NON-PAYMENT OF BOUNTY—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 38

MILITIA—OFFICERS' GRATUITIES—Question, Col. M'Calmont; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 39

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECRUITING AGENTS — Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 39

MAGAZINE RIFLES—Question, Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 39

LIGHTHOUSES IN THE RED SEA—Question, Mr. Chas. M'Arthur (Liverpool Exchange); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 40

RUSSIA AND TURKEY—RAILWAY CONCESSIONS—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) and Earl Percy (Kensington, S.); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 41

TREATIES WITH FOREIGN POWERS—Question, Mr. Hedderwick; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 41

UGANDA RAILWAY CONTRACTS — Question, Mr. Engledew (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 42

ARMENIA—BRITISH CONSULATE AT BITLIS—Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 42

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COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE DRAFT COPYRIGHT BILL—Question, Mr. Lecky (Dublin University); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 42

THE WAIMA CLAIMS—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District); Answer, Sir M. Hicks-Beach 43

STAMP DUTY ON DEBENTURES—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, Sir M. Hicks-Beach 43

INCREASED EXCISE DUTIES—DIFFICULTIES OF CLEARANCE—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, Sir M. Hicks-Beach 45

SOUTH-EASTERN AND CHATHAM RAILWAY—WORKMEN'S TRAINS—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, N.); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 46

THE COMPANIES' BILL—Questions, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.), and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Ritchie 46

PRISONS' FLOGGING REGULATIONS—Question, Sir Chas. Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) 47

INCOME TAX SURVEYORS' DISTRICTS—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) 49

MERCHANT SHIPPING—CONTRACTS FOR LIVE STOCK TRANSPORTS—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 49

POST OFFICE ANNUITIES—Question, Sir James Rankin (Herefordshire, Leominster); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 49

TELEPHONING CABLEGRAMS—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon; Answer, Mr. Hanbury 50

MANCHESTER POSTMEN'S STRIPES—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 50

CABLE DELAYS TO RUSSIA—Question, Mr. A. G. H. Gibbs (London); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 51

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT—ATHY UNION CHARGES—Question, Mr. Engledew (Kildare, N.); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 51

IRISH LAND COMMISSION APPEALS—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 52

LADYSMITH DISTURBANCES IN BELFAST—Question, Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 52

CLONES POST OFFICE—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury... 53

MONAGHAN POSTAL STAFF—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Mr. Hanbury 53

IRISH SUB-POSTMASTER'S DUTIES—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 54

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DUBLIN POLICE AND THE LICENSING LAWS—Question, Mr. Harrington (Dublin Harbour); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 54

INNISKILLEN ASSIZES—ASSESSMENT OF COUNTY CAVAN—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 55

LAND VALUATION—ANNALY ESTATE—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 55

KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL SECRETARY—Questions, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) and Mr. Daly; Answers, Mr. Atkinson 56

BALTIMORE RAILWAY EXTENSION—Question, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 57

IRISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson... 57

IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 58

MEATH MAIN ROADS—Question, Mr. Gibney (Meath, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 58

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 58

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

NEW BILL.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND)—Bill to authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Secretary to Sir Matthew White Ridley, and the Lord Advocate 59

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Scotland) Bill—"To authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools," presented accordingly, and read the First Time; to be read a Second Time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139] 59

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (ENGLAND AND IRELAND)—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That in the economic circumstances of Ireland the disproportion between the taxation of Ireland and its taxable capacity, disclosed by the findings of the Royal Commission, demands the serious attention of the Government, with a view to a remedy."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Power (Waterford, E.) 69
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) 72
Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) ... 80
Mr. Purvis (Peterborough)... 84
Sergeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 86
Sir T. G. Esmonde (Kerry, W.) 93
Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.) ... 99
Mr. Lecky (Dublin University) 102
Mr. Clancy (Dublin Co., N.) ... 107
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 114
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) ... 126
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ... 133
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick)... 137

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 220. (Division List No. 76.)

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Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—Read the Third Time, and passed ... 141

Census (Ireland) Bill—Order read, for resuming the adjourned debate on Question [19th March], "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."

Question again proposed.

Bill read a Second Time, and committed for Monday next 141

Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill—Read a Second Time, and committed for Monday next 141

LUNACY BOARD (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES, &c.]—Resolution reported, "That it is expedient to amend the law relating to the number of the staff of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of their salaries, and of the expenses of the Board, and the remuneration of the Chairman and Commissioners."

Resolution read a Second Time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

DISCUSSION :—

Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) 142
The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray (Buteshire) 142
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 142
Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.) ... 144

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 115 ; Noes, 38. (Division List No. 77.)

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther.

Lunacy Board (Scotland) (Salaries, etc.) Bill—"To amend the law relating to the number and salaries of the Staff of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, and to provide for the remuneration of certain of the Commissioners," presented accordingly, and read the First Time ; to be read a Second Time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 140.]

Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill (SECOND READING)—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Tomlinson (Preston) ... 145
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 145
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) ... 145
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) ... 145

MIDWIVES [EXPENSES]—Considered in Committee.

In the Committee.

[Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk, in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 146
The Vice-President of the Committee of Council (Sir John Gorst, Cambridge University) 146
Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.) ... 147

Committee report progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Bill—SECOND READING—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) ... 147
Mr. William Johnston (Belfast, S.) 148
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley) 148
Sir J. Blundell Maple (Camberwell, Dulwich) 148

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON in the Chair.]

Dr. Tanner (Cork County, Mid) 148
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 148

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Tuesday next.

House adjourned at a quarter before One of the clock.

LORDS: FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 149

Governments Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments 149

Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.]—The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported with Amendments 149

Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Committed 149

Hammond (G. H.) Company Bill [H.L.]—Read Second Time (according to Order) 149

Higham Ferrers Water Bill [H.L.]—Read Third Time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 149

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Motherwell Water Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 149

Leith Burgh Provisional Order Bill [H.L.]—House in Committee (according to Order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived; and Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next 149

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES—Leave given to the Select Committee to report from time to time: First Report made; to be printed; and to be considered on Tuesday next. (No. 37) 149

SUPERANNUATION—Treasury Minute, dated 15th March, 1900, declaring that Margaret Jones, sub-postmistress, Ruthin, Post Office Department, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of her department: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 149

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR—Abstract of the general annual account for the year ending 26th July, 1899: Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 150

PETITION.

MUNICIPAL TRADING—Petition that a Select Committee may be appointed to inquire into the question of municipal trading; of London Chamber of Commerce; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 150

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read First Time; to be printed; and to be read Second Time on Monday next (The Marquess of Salisbury); and Standing Order No. 39 to be considered in order to its being dispensed with. (No. 36) 150

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.)—Committee—House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3:—

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 24, to leave out from 'the' in line 24 to the second 'and' in line 25."—(*Lord Harris.*)

Lord Windsor 151

Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out sub-section (*b*)"—(*Lord Harris*).

Lord Windsor ... ... 151 *Lord Harris* 152

Amendment agreed to.

Lord Windsor 152
The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 152

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Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Lord Windsor 152

Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 agreed to, with drafting Amendment.

Clauses 7, 8, and 9 agreed to.

Clause 10. :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 40, at the beginning of the Clause, to insert as a separate sub-section:—'(1.) The provisions of the Public Libraries Act, 1892, shall extend to Ireland, with the substitution of the rural district as library district in place of the parish, and of the rural district council as library authority in place of the overseers for the parish.'"—(*Lord Monteagle of Brandon*).

The Lord Chancellor for Ireland (*Lord Ashbourne*) 153
Lord Monteagle and Brandon ... 154
Lord Windsor 154

Amendment (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

Clause 10 agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-Section 2, line 22, to leave out 'without the order of a judge in chambers being first obtained.'"—(*Lord Windsor.*)

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) ... 155
Lord Windsor 155

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 and 13 agreed to.

Schedule.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, to leave out lines 29 and 30."—(*Lord Harris.*)

Agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 38.)

Census (Great Britain) Bill—House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read the Third Time on Monday next 156

THE NEW EDUCATION CODE—GRANTS, INSPECTION, ETC.

DISCUSSION :—

Lord Reay 156
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 160
The Earl of Kimberley 163

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

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COMMONS: FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Ordered, that the Bill be read a Second Time 165

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Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR further reported, That they had appointed Mr. John Edward Ellis to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect to the Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill; Report to lie upon the Table 168

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Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee that they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill:—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Harry Foster, Mr. Goulding, Sir Cameron Gull, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Grant Lawson, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Runciman, Captain Sinclair, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, Mr. Courtenay Warner, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Frederick Wilson; Reports to lie upon the Table 168

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That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law with respect to persons carrying on business as Money-lenders." [Money-lending Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Urban District Council of Otley to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes." [Otley Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to divide the separate undertaking authorised by The Donegal Railway Act, 1896, into two separate undertakings; to extend the time for the purchase of lands and completion of works by that Act authorised; to provide for the granting of rebates in favour of the railway from Donegal to Ballyshannon; to release the County Council of the County of Donegal from their liability under the West Donegal Light Railway Order; and for other purposes." [Donegal Railway Bill [Lords.]

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Factory and Workshop Act (1878) Amendment (No. 2) Bill—"To amend the Factory and Workshop Act, 1878, by reducing the period of employment on Saturday," presented and read the First Time; to be read a Second Time upon Wednesday, 4th April, and to be printed. [Bill 140] 201

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (No. 2)—Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Luttrell, and Mr. Robert Price.

Agricultural Holdings (No. 2) Bill—"To amend and consolidate the law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England," presented and read the First Time; to be read a Second Time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 141] 201

SUPPLY [Committee.] Civil Service Estimates. Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (IRELAND)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'In the opinion of this House, the provision for Universities is totally inadequate, and none can be regarded as equitable which does not secure for the Roman Catholics of Ireland, equally with other members of the community, facilities for University Education without violence to their religious feeling,' instead thereof"—(*Mr. J. P. Farrell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

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Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 177; Noes, 91. (Division List No. 78.)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

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MIDWIVES [EXPENSES]—Considered in Committee. (In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk, in the Chair.]

Question again proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such Expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of Midwives, and to regulate their practice."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*)... 300

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1900.

VISCOUNT GORT—Ordered and Directed, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Viscount Gort to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland. And it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 301

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

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STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Central London Railway Bill ought to be dispensed with. That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Glasgow District Tramways Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct Tramways No. 1, 2, and so much of No. 3 as lies outside the burgh of Dumbarton, be struck out of the Bill. Read, and agreed to 301

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Bexhill and Rotherfield Railway Bill [H.L]- Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 5th instant and on Monday last discharged; and Bill committed 302

Rugeley Gas Bill—Read second time, and committed 302

Newport (Monmonthshire) Gas Bill [H.L.]—Read third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 302

Paignton Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]—Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Exmouth and District Water Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord De Mauley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Templeton; read, and agreed to 302

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ARMY (RECRUITING).—Annual Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for 1899 303

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Lord Monkswell 303

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

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House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Central London Railway Bill. Ordered that the Bill be read a second time ... 305

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That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for supplying with water the borough of Higham Ferrers, and certain parishes and places adjacent thereto, in the county of Northampton." Higham Ferrers Water Bill [Lords] 333

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Elementary Education Bill—The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) 334

Bill to amend the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Gorst and Mr. Attorney-General.

Elementary Education Bill—"To amend the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.]

Burial Grounds Bill—The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) 335

Burial Grounds Bill—"To amend the Law relating to Burial Grounds," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143.]

Sea Fisheries Bill—

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 336
Mr. Maurice Healy 336

Question proposed, that the Bill be now read a first time.

Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 336 *Mr. Ritchie* 336

Bill to amend the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley.

Sea Fisheries Bill—"To amend the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 144.]

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Finance Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 :—

Amendment proposed—

"On page 1, line 16, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.' "—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Question proposed—"That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 344
Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) ... 346
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Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.) ... 368
Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien 368
Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) 369
Mr. Jordan (Fermanagh, S.) ... 370

Question put.

The Committee divided.—Ayes, 204; Noes, 49. (Division List No. 79.)

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'four' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'six' stand part of the Clause."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) 374
Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) ... 375
Mr. J. A. Pease (Northumberland, Tyneside) 376
Sir M. Hicks-Beach 377
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) ... 377
Mr. Daly (Monaghon, S.) ... 378

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 135; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 80.)

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 379
Sir M. Hicks-Beach ... 383
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) ... 384
Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 387
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 389
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 391

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 172; Noes, 69. (Division List No. 81.)

Clause 2 :—

Amendment proposed,

"In page 1, line 22, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.' "—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

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Question proposed, "That the words 'or Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir M. Hicks-Beach ... 400
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 400
Sir William Harcourt 403
Mr. Flynn 404

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 210 ; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 82.)

Question proposed, "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) ... 409
Mr. Daly 411
Mr. Flavin 412
Mr. Edward Barry (*Cork County, S.*) 414

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 179 ; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 83.)

Clause 3.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)—Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Committee report progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION—Committee appointed to consider and report on the advisability of legislation to ensure the systematic and regular inspection and certification of boilers, with the object of diminishing the risk to life and property arising from boiler explosions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*) 415

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT—Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Carew, and Mr. Clancy 415

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment Bill—"To amend the Merchant Shipping Acts," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 4th April, and to be printed. [Bill 145—415].

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve of the clock.

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LORDS: TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1900.

ROYAL ASSENT.

COMMISSION—The following Bills received the Royal Assent—1, War Loan; 2, Consolidated Fund (No. 2); 3, Census (Great Britain) 417

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]—Falkirk and District Water Bill [H.L.]; Clecthorpes Gas Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with amendments... 417

New Russia Company Bill [H.L.]—Reported with amendments 417

Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [H.L.]—Reported with amendments 417

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]—Governments Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [H.L.]—Read third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 417

Hamilton Burgh Bill—Brought from Commons; read first time, and referred to the Examiners 417

Lee Conservancy Bill—Message from the Commons for leave for the Lord Russell of Killowen to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee of that House; leave given for his Lordship to attend if he think fit, and his Lordship consenting thereto, a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith 417

Leith Burgh Provisional Order Bill [H.L.]—Read third time (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 417

Military Lands Provisional Order Bill—Read second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 418

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TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES—No. 2391. Texas 418

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT)—Return of prices of Irish agricultural produce for the years 1881 to 1899 inclusive. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 418

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS)—Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Holborn, St. Pancras, and Stepney, and incorporating the councils thereof and for other purposes connected therewith. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 36) 418

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Standing Committee with further amendments. The Report of the amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 39) 418

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Youthful Offenders Bill [H.L.]—[Third Reading]—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Lord James of Hereford.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Lord Monkswell ... ... 422 *Lord Norton* 421
The Lord Privy Seal (Viscount Cross) 421

On Question, agreed to; Bill read third time accordingly.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, at the end of Clause 7, to insert, as a new clause, 'The power of recalling a child to an industrial school while under the supervision of the managers conferred by the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act, 1894, shall be exerciseable in respect of every such child, whether licensed to employment or not.'"—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

Lord James of Hereford 424

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITIA AND MILITIA RESERVE STATISTICS—Question, Lord Raglan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 425

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES—First Report from the Select Committee considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

House adjourned at Five of the clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Donegal Railway Bill [Lords]; Lancashire Inebriates Acts Board Bill [Lords]; Otley Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords]. Ordered that the Bills be read a second time 426

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Metropolitan District Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 427

City and South London Railway Bill—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] 427

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Grantham Gas Bill; Redhill Gas Bill—Read the third time, and passed 427

Hartlepool Gas and Water Bill; Wetherby District Water Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 427

Southport Extension and Tramways Bill [By Order]—Order for consideration of Bill, as amended, read.

Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 427

Bill ordered to be read the third time.

Stockport Corporation Tramways Bill [By Order]—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 427

London United Tramways Bill [by Order]—Bill read a second time and committed.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee on the London United Tramways Bill, to consider whether it is desirable to introduce into the Bill provisions to secure cheap fares for the labouring classes, and whether amendments should be made in the clauses with this object in the original Acts of the company in respect to the number of cars run, the hours at which the cars are run, the maximum and minimum fares charged, and whether penalties should be inserted to secure the objects of the clauses.—(*Mr. Lough.*) 428

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2)—Bill to confirm two Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Fethard and Skibbereen, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour 428

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—"To confirm two Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Fethard and Skibbereen," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 147.] 428

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Accrington, Chipping Norton, Gosport, and Alverstoke, Kingswinford (Rural), Newport Pagnell, and Wirral (Rural), ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin 428

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—"To confirm Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Accrington, Chipping Norton, Gosport, and Alverstoke, Kingswinford (Rural), Newport Pagnell, and Wirral (Rural)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 148.] 428

ROYAL ASSENT—Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went, and being returned,

Mr. Speaker reported the Royal Assent to:—

1. War Loan Act, 1900.
2. Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Act, 1900.
3. Census (Great Britain) Act, 1900 429

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Borough Funds Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Coal Mines Regulation Acts Amendment Bill—Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Distress Abolition and Substitution Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Housing of the Working Classes Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act (1854) Amendment Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 429

Licensing Acts Amendment (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh and Leith, against; to lie upon the Table 430

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Kinlet; and Highley; to lie upon the Table 430

Occupying Tenants' Enfranchisement Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table 430

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield; Newcastle on Tyne; Hartlepool (two); Hazelrigg; Preston; Padgate (two); Pendlebury; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table ... 430

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (fourteen); and Exeter; to lie upon the Table ... 430

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sussex; and York (two); to lie upon the Table 430

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Bill—Two Petitions from Clydebank, in favour; to lie upon the Table 430

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill and Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petition from Bolton (Lanc.), in favour; to lie upon the Table 430

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from York (two); and Pendlebury (two); to lie upon the Table 430

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Workmen's Houses Tenure Bill—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 430

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ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1899-1900)—Paper [presented 26th March] to be printed. [No. 110.] 431

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS)—Copy presented,—of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Holborn, St. Pancras, and Stepney, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.] 431

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STANDING ORDERS—Resolution reported from the Committee; "That, in the case of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

Resolution agreed to 431

Inebriates Amendment (Scotland) Bill (Lords)—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 149.] 431

SELECTION STANDING (COMMITTEES)—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Colomb, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Baird; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. J. W. Wilson (Worcestershire, North), Captain Pretyman, Sir Charles Welby, and Lord Dalkeith. Report to lie upon the Table 431

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ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS—Question, Mr. Warner; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 437

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ROYAL ARTILLERY—SERVICE QUALIFICATION FOR PROMOTION—Question, Mr. Newdigate; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 438

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—DISCHARGE OF ENGINEERS—Question, Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams ... 438

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HEATING ARRANGEMENTS IN SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork); Answer, The Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) 440

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) 440

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CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR VAGRANTS—Question, Mr. Lloyd Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) 441

FLANNEN ISLANDS LIGHTHOUSE—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 442

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Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 456

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Midwives Bill—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, &c. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.] Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 112.]. Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 150.] 456

NEW BILLS.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—Bill to amend the Acts relating to Industrial Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Flower, Colonel Denny, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Greville, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Alfred Hutton, and Mr. Trevelyan 456

Industrial Schools Bill—"To amend the Acts relating to Industrial Schools," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 4th April, and to be printed. [Bill 151.] 456

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS)—Bill for the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other public offices in London, and for purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Attorney General, and Mr. Hanbury 456

Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill—"For the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other public offices in London, and for purposes connected therewith," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 152.]... 456

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PETTY CUSTOMS ABOLITION (SCOTLAND)—Bill to abolish Petty Customs in Scotland, and to make provision for levying a rate in lieu thereof, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Asquith, Mr. E. B. Baillie, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Nicol, and Mr. Ure 457

Petty Customs Abolition (Scotland) Bill—"To abolish Petty Customs in Scotland, and to make provision for levying a rate in lieu thereof," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 153.] 457

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (NO. 2)—Bill to make further provision for parish councils in Scotland borrowing for the purpose of providing public offices, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Baird, Mr. Buchanan, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Renshaw, and Mr. Wylie 457

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment (No. 2) Bill—"To make further provision for parish councils in Scotland borrowing for the purpose of providing public offices," presented, and read for the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 154.] 457

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) (SCOTLAND)—Bill to regulate the attendance of children at school in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Crombie, Colonel Denny, Mr. Parker Smith, and Mr. Robert Wallace 457

Education (School Attendance) (Scotland) Bill—"To regulate the attendance of children at school in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 155.] 457

WAYS AND MEANS—The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 458

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

Finance Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe, in the Chair.]

Clause 4:—

Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.) 458

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 460

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 13, to leave out the words 'the United Kingdom,' and insert the words 'Great Britain' instead thereof."—(*Mr Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'the United Kingdom' stand part of the clause."

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DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Hayden 461
Mr. Clancy (Dublin Co., N.) 462
Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 464
Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.) 465
Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.) .. 466
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 466
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny) 469
Mr. Edward Barry (Cork Co., S.) 470
Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.) ... 471

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 261 ; Noes, 40. (Division List No. 84.)

Question proposed, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir Cuthbert Quilter (Suffolk, Sudbury) 475
Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 483
Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.) ... 485
Mr. Whittaker (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) ... 490
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 492
Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.) ... 494
Capt. Pretyman (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 495
Mr. R. Jasper More (Shropshire, Ludlow) 495
Mr. Gretton (Derbyshire, S.) ... 496

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 31. (Division List No. 85.)

Clause 7 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 29, to leave out the words 'The United Kingdom,' in order to insert the words 'Great Britain' instead thereof."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'The United Kingdom' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Flynn 503

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 146 ; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 86.)

Question proposed, "That Clause 7 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Daly 507
Mr. Flavin 507

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 126 ; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 87.)

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) formally moved to omit Clause 8.

Sir M. Hicks Beach 511

Question, "That Clause 8 stand part of the Bill," put and negatived.

Clause 9 :—

Question proposed, "That Clause 9 stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 511
Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 512
Mr. Warr (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) 513
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 513
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 514
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ... 514

Clause put, and negatived.

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Clause 10 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 26, to leave out the words 'or any other person.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) 515

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 29, after the words 'death of the deceased,' to insert the words 'to the extent to which a benefit accrues or arises by the cessor of such estate or interest.'"—(*Mr Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir Richard Webster 516

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 10, page 5, line 34, after the words last inserted, to insert 'by the deceased.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir Richard Webster 518

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 36, after the word 'assurance' to insert the word 'divesting.'"—(*The Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'divesting' be there inserted.

Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork) 519

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 3, to leave out sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

DISCUSSION :—

The Solicitor General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs)... ... 521
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 522
Mr. Butcher (York) 524
Captain Pretyman 525
Mr. Maurice Healy 528

Question put, and agreed to.

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 7, after the word 'interest' to add: 'Provided that where an interest in expectancy in any property has before the passing of this Act been *bona fide* sold or mortgaged for full consideration in money or money's worth, then no other duty on such property shall be payable by the purchaser or mortgagee when the interest falls into possession than would have been payable if this section had not passed; and in the case of a mortgage any higher duty payable by the mortgagor shall rank as a charge subsequent to that of the mortgagee.'"—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir Robert Finlay ... ... 530 *Mr. Gibson Bowles* 530

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 531 *Sir Robert Finlay* 531

Clause agreed to.

Clause 12:—

Mr. Maurice Healy ... 532 *Sir Robert Finlay* 532

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 32, after the words 'Income Tax,' to insert the words 'Great Britain.'"—(*Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 536 *Mr. Lough* 537

Question put:—

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 29; Noes, 165. (Division List No. 88.)

Clause agreed to.

Clause 14:—

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Sir M. Hicks-Beach ... 541 *Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)* 542
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) ... ... 542 *Sir M. Hicks Beach* 543

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 15, 16, and 17 agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4:—

Committee Report progress; to sit again upon Thursday... 544

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—On the Motion for adjournment, Mr. Anstruther (St. Andrews Burghs) 544

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to Twelve of the clock.

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 28TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill—As Amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 545

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] [Stamp Duties]—Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of certain Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present Session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow (*Dr. Farquharson*) 545

PETITIONS.

Corporal Punishment Bill—Petition of the Romilly Society, against; to lie upon the Table 545

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Peebles, in favour; to lie upon the Table 545

Midwives Bill—Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 545

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table 545

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Walker; Hartlepool (three); Hastings; Ponder's End; Dollar; Blackburn; Motherwell; Worthing; and Bolton; to lie upon the Table ... 545

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Seven Petitions from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 545

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Bollington (three); Dollar; Blackburn; Stony Stratford; Bolton; and Harrogate; to lie upon the Table 546

Town Councils (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Cupar, in favour; to lie upon the Table 546

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

MINES AND QUARRIES—Copy presented, of General Report and Statistics for the year 1898, Part IV., Colonial and Foreign Statistics; Statistics relating to Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 546

ALIENS—Return presented, relative thereto (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 140, of Session 1899) [Address 31st January; *Mr. Jesse Collings*] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.] 546

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET—Accounts presented for the year 1899, with an account of extraordinary Works executed other than the general Repairs for the same period [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 546

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES)—Copy presented of Rule made by the Irish Land Commission under the Land Purchase Acts, dated the 19th March, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 546

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) ACT, 1896 (RULES)—Copy presented of Order in Council, dated 22nd March, 1900, amending the Railways (Ireland) Order, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 546

CHINA (No. 1, 1900)—Copy presented of further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of China [in continuation of China (Nos. 1 and 2, 1899)] [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 546

Corporal Punishment Bill—[SECOND READING].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed:—"That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Wharton.*)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. H. D. Greene (Shrewsbury) 561
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport)... ... 569
Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 573
Sergeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 575
Capt. Phillpotts (Devonshire, Torquay) 578
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) ... 580
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley (Lancashire, Blackpool) 582
Col. Lockwood (Essex, Epping)... 587
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ... 588
Col. Sandys (Lancashire, Bootle) 591
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 592

Question put.

The House divided—Ayes, 72; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 89.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Coal Mines Regulation Acts Amendment Bill—SECOND READING—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Barlow.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Woods (Essex, Walthamstow) 597
Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 598
Mr. Austin (Limerick, W.) .. 599

It being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

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Highways and Bridges Act (1891) Amendment Bill—Considered in Committee; Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next 599

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 599

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—On the motion for the adjournment of the House—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.), Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice (Wiltshire, Cricklade), and Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.); Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 599

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

LORDS: THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with—Portland Urban District Gas. The same was ordered to lie on the Table 601

Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with amendments 601

Cowes Pier Bill [H.L.]—The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with amendments 601

Exmouth and District Water Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill; Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 601

Pontefract Park Bill; Colonial Bank Bill—Read 2ª, and committed ... 601

Lincoln Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 601

City and South London Railway Bill; Grantham Gas Bill; Redhill Gas Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 601

Military Lands Provisional Order Bill—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow 601

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.]; Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation [H.L.]; Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.]. Moved to resolve, That it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalga-

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mation Bill [H.L.]; The Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

DISCUSSION—

Lord Monteagle of Brandon 603
Lord Greville 604
The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Morley) 604

On Question, agreed to.

Ordered, that a Message be sent to the Commons to communicate this Resolution, and to desire their concurrence.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TRADE REPORTS—Annual Series: No. 2,392. Trade of Curaçoa and its Dependencies 605

CHINA, No. 1 (1900)—Further correspondence respecting the affairs of China (in continuation of China, Nos. 1 and 2). (1899.)... 605

COLONIES—Papers relating to university education of Roman Catholics in certain colonies. 605

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES)—Rule, dated 19th March, 1900, under the Land Purchase Acts. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 606

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) ACT, 1896 (RULES)—Order in Council, dated 22nd March, 1900, amending the Railways (Ireland) Order, 1897 606

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET—Account of moneys received and paid by the Chamberlain of the City of London in relation to the Metropolitan Cattle Market, for the year 1899; also an account of extraordinary works executed other than general repairs for the same period. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 606

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS)—Draft Orders in Council for the establishment of the metropolitan boroughs of Chelsea, Finsbury, Kensington, and Paddington, and incorporating the councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) and to be printed [No. 40] 606

Copyright Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read. Moved,—That the Bill be now read a second time (*Lord Monkswell*) ... ...

DISCUSSION:—

The Secretary for Scotland (Lord Balfour of Burleigh) 606
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Selborne) 608
The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) ... 609
Lord Thring 609

On Question agreed to; Bill read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee.

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The following Lords were named of the Select Committee—L. Chancellor, E. Selborne, V. Knutsford, L. Balfour, L. Hatherton, L. Monkswell, L. Thring, L. Farrer, L. Welby, L. Davey, L. Avebury. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Twelve o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

Copyright (Artistic) Bill [H.L.] [SECOND READING]. Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Monkswell 610

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and referred to a Select Committee.

The Lords following were named of the Select Committee—L. Chancellor, E. Selborne, V. Knutsford, L. Balfour, L. Hatherton, L. Monkswell, L. Thring, L. Farrer, L. Welby, L. Davey, L. Avebury. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Twelve o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

COLONIAL DEFENCE.

The Earl of Camperdown ... 611 *The Earl of Selborne* ... 615

Education (Scotland) Bill [H.L.]—Funds Available. Moved, That there be laid before the House a Return of all the funds available in whole or in part under the Education (Scotland) Bill [H.L.], and the purposes for which they have hitherto been used by the various county and burgh authorities in Scotland.—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

The Secretary for Scotland (Lord Balfour of Burleigh) 619

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

EDUCATION, ETC., SCHEMES—ORDERS IN COUNCIL—Ordered, That where by Statute any scheme before it can be sanctioned by Order in Council is ordered to lie on the Table for a prescribed number of days, it shall be laid on the Table in a printed form, and not otherwise; and thereupon shall forthwith be circulated to the Members of this House.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

COMMISSIONS FOR YEOMANRY OFFICERS—Question, Lord Newton; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 621

RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS IN THE MILITIA.

Lord Raglan ... ... 622 *The Marquess of Lansdowne* ... 623

SUPERSESSION OF MILITIA OFFICERS—Question, Lord Raglan; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne 625

HOME DEFENSIVE FORCE—Question, The Earl of Wemyss; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne 626

NEW BILL.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors to children was presented by Lord Sudley (E. Arran) (for the Viscount Templeton); read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. [No. 41.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six of the clock.

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COMMONS: THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London and India Docks Joint Committee Bill. Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 627

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Portland Urban District Gas. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 628

Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Dr. Farquharson*) 628

Airdrie, Coatbridge, and District Water Trust Bill; Morecambe Urban District Council Gas Bill; Osset Corporation Gas Bill—Read the third time, and passed 628

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; North Warwickshire Water Bill; Spalding Urban District Council (Water) Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 628

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] **(Stamp Duties)**—Considered in Committee. Resolved, That it is expedient to authorize the imposition of the following Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present Session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society, viz.:—For and upon the First Memorial enrolled of the names of persons who shall be deemed, held, and taken to be Trustees of the Society, the sum of Five pounds; and upon every other such Memorial in which the name of any person shall for the first time be inserted as a Trustee of the Society, the sum of Five pounds. Resolution to be reported To-morrow 628

Lowestoft Railway Bill—Order [19th February] that the Lowestoft Railway Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn—(*Dr. Farquharson*) 629

London Water (Purchase) Bill [by Order]—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

Mr. Stuart (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 629

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question"

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DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Cohen (Islington E.) .. 639
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets Poplar) ... 639
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 644
Mr. Mellor (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) 652
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 653
Mr Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 662
Mr. Samuel Montagu (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) ... 664
Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 665
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 666
The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone S.) 668

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 151; Noes, 234. (Division List No. 90.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

London Water (Welsh Supply) Bill [by Order]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Steadman.*)

Amendment proposed -

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :

Sir J. T. Dillwyn Llewelyn (Swansea Town)... ... 674
Mr. Stuart (Shoreditch, Hoxton) 675
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 676
Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) 676
The President of the Local Government Board, Mr. Chaplin (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) ... 677
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 677

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

The Metropolitan Water Companies' Bill -Order for Second Reading read; Order discharged; Bill withdrawn 678

Glastonbury Corporation Gas Bill—Reported; Report to lie on the table, and to be printed 678

Glastonbury and Street Gas Bill—Reported; Parties do not proceed; Report to lie upon the table 678

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PETITIONS.

Corporal Punishment Bill—Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table ... ...

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Dunblane, in favour; to lie upon the Table 679

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Barnes; and Newport Pagnell; to lie upon the Table 679

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Trowbridge; Kingsland; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table 679

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sunderland (twenty-three); Trowbridge; Penshurst; Crouch End; Preston; Manchester; London (four); Wesleyan Methodist Conference; and Coalville; to lie upon the Table 679

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Two Petitions from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 679

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Coalville; and London (two); to lie upon the Table 679

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS)—Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Chelsea, Finsbury, Kensington, and Paddington, and incorporating the Councils thereof; and for other purposes in connection therewith [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.] 679

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS (COLONIES)—Copy presented, of Papers relating to University Education of Roman Catholics in certain Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 679

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2392 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 679

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND)—Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Return of Deputy Lieutenants displaced during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 680

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY—Return presented, relative thereto [Address, 15th March; *Mr. Strachey*]; to lie upon the Table 680

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND)—Return ordered, "relating to Imperial Revenue (Collection and Expenditure (Great Britain and Ireland) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 318, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Joseph A. Pease*) 680

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MERCHANT SERVICE (CERTIFICATES OF MASTERS, MATES, SKIPPERS, AND SECOND HANDS)—Return ordered, "showing, for the last completed year, the number of successful and unsuccessful candidates (1) for Masters' and Mates' Certificates of Competency in the United Kingdom; and (2) for Skippers' and Second Hands' Certificates of Competency in England and Wales and Ireland, distinguishing the ports at which the several examinations were held, and stating the fees charged."—(*Captain Sinclair*) ... 680

PROCEDURE OF THE HOUSE—ALIEN SEAMEN ON BRITISH TRANSPORTS—"BLOCKING" NOTICES—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Ruling, Mr. Speaker 682

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SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—USAGES OF WAR—BOER ABUSE OF THE WHITE FLAG—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 682

BOER ARRESTS OF NON-COMBATANTS—CASE OF MR. GARSTIN—Question, Mr. Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 683

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MARINE INSURANCE BILL—Question, Mr. Warr; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe), Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton), Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.), Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.), Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire), and Mr. H. S. Foster (Suffolk, Lowestoft) 718

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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Money Lending Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 156.] 719

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 157.] ... 719

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to Youthful Offenders; and for other purposes connected therewith." Youthful Offenders Bill [Lords]. Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, to increase the number of Magistrates in the Burgh of Leith." Leith Burgh Provisional Order Bill [Lords]. Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend in certain respects the Acts relating to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board; and for other purposes." Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords]. And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act for empowering the Governments Stocks and other Securities Investment Company, Limited, to increase the dividend upon its preferred ordinary stock; and to amend The Governments Stock Investment Company, Limited, Act, 1887." Governments Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords]. Lee Conservancy Bill.—That they give leave to the Lord Russell of Killowen to attend in order to his being examined as a witness before the Select Committee appointed by this House on the Lee Conservancy Bill; his Lordship consenting ... 720

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bills [Lords]; Government Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 720

Leith Burgh Provisional Order Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 158.] 720

Finance Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) in the Chair.]

New clause—

"(1) If any manufacturer of tobacco shall have in his custody or possession fit for sale, or shall tender for drawback, or if any dealer in or retailer of tobacco shall have in his custody or possession any tobacco containing a greater proportion of oil than 3 per cent., he shall incur an excise penalty of £50, and the tobacco shall be forfeited.

(2) The expression 'oil' in this section includes any substance of a fatty or oily nature which may be present in tobacco, and the expression 'fit for sale' shall, as respects roll or cut tobacco, have the meaning assigned to it by Section 4 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1887.

(3) In computing the amount of moisture in one hundred pounds of tobacco for the purposes of that part of Section 1 of the Manufactured Tobacco Act, 1863 (as amended by subsequent Acts), which deals with the calculation of moisture for drawback, any fraction of a pound of moisture—

(*a*) if it is over any number of entire pounds less than fourteen, shall be treated as an entire pound, and

(*b*) if it is over fourteen entire pounds, or any number of entire pounds exceeding fourteen, shall be disregarded;

and the quantity of dry tobacco shall be treated as diminished or increased accordingly.

This sub-section shall not apply to snuff."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)—

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Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Sir J. A. Willox (Liverpool, Everton) 721
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 721

Clause (by leave) withdrawn.

New clause—

"The duty to be paid on goods or commodities deposited in a customs or excise warehouse is hereby declared to be the duty chargeable at the date of the actual removal of those goods or commodities from the warehouse, and if before that date any sums shall have been paid in respect of duty, the difference (if any) between the sums so paid and the actual duty chargeable shall be paid or repaid, as the case may be."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)—

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 722
Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 722
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 722
Sir J. Leng (Dundee) ... 723
Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.) 723
Mr. Lough 724
Sir M. Hicks Beach 724

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause added.

New clause—

"Estate duty shall not be payable on an estate the principal value of which does not exceed five thousand pounds in the case of any person killed, or dying within twelve months from the effect of any wound received, in the performance of his duty in the Navy, the Army, or other forces of the Crown. The date from which this exemption may be claimed shall be the twelfth day of October one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine. The Treasury may, if they think fit, authorise the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to remit the death duties in any case of an estate the principal value of which does not exceed five thousand pounds, when the person loses his life in the performance of some heroic act of saving or attempting to save another person or persons from danger, disease, or accident."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 726
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ... 727
Mr. Butcher (York) ... 729
Capt. Pretyman (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 730
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) ... 733
Mr. Lowe (Birmingham, Edgbaston) 735
Sir M. Hicks Beach 737
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 738

Clause by leave withdrawn.

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New clause—

"Section 7, Sub-section 1, of the Finance Act, 1894, shall be construed as if there were added at the end thereof the following enactment:—

1. Where on the death of any person subject to military or naval law under the Army Act or the Naval Discipline Act when on active service (within the meaning of that expression as defined in the Army Act, and extended to a person subject to naval law or engaged in naval operations against the enemy), the principal value of the property passing on the death of such person to or in trust for his widow, or any lineal descendant of such person, shall not exceed five thousand pounds, no death duties (as defined in Section 13, Sub-section 3, of the principal Act) shall be leviable in respect of such property, and where on the death of any such person the principal value of the property so passing shall exceed five thousand pounds in determining the value of the property so passing for the purpose of estate duty, an allowance of five thousand pounds shall be made and deducted from the value thereof, in respect of which five thousand pounds no such death duties as aforesaid shall be leviable.

2. Nothing in this section is to preclude any exemption from taking effect which would have been applicable if this section had not been enacted.

3. This section is to apply and have effect with respect to any death since the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine."—(*Captain Pretyman.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION—

Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Brightside) 741
Mr. Gibson Bowles ... 745
Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.) ... 747
Sir M. Hicks Beach ... 749

Question put and negatived.

Question proposed:—

New clause—

"Section 20 of The Customs Consolidation Act, 1876 (which has reference to the effect of changes of duty on existing contracts), shall apply to the imposition of new duties as well as to increases, decreases, or repeals, and as so amended shall apply to duties of excise as well as to duties of customs, with the substitution in the case of the excise duty on beer of the time of the charge of the duty for the time of the clearance and delivery from the warehouse."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Brought up and read the first and second times, and added.

New clause—

"A conveyance on sale made for any consideration in respect whereof it is chargeable with *ad valorem* duty, and in further consideration of a covenant by the purchaser to make, or of his having previously made, any substantial improvement of or addition to the property conveyed to him, or of any covenant relating to the subject matter of the conveyance, is not chargeable, and shall be deemed not to have been chargeable with any duty in respect of such further consideration."—(*Mr. Bond.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Mr. Bond (Nottingham, E.) 749
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 750
Sir M. Hicks Beach 750

Question put.

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The Committee proceeded to a Division; but the doors of the No Lobby having been opened before the Tellers in the No Lobby were present, the Chairman directed the Committee to proceed again to a Division:—Ayes, 218; Noes, 37. (Division List No. 91.)

Clause added—

Mr. Gibson Bowles 754

Schedules 1 and 2 agreed to.

Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill, as amended, to the House."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 229; Noes, 28. (Division List No. 92.)

Bill reported, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee of five members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction; that a message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath appointed a Committee of five members to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction; and to request that their Lordships will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of this House." —(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester)... 757
Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 759
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 760
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 760
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) ... 761
Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) ... 765
Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire)... 766
The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 769
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 772
Mr. Jonathan Samuel (Stockton).. 775

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Army (Annual) Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 776

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4:—

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

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Motion made and Question proposed—That the Chairman do report progress; and ask leave to sit again.—*Mr. Flynn.*

But it appearing to the Chairman that the motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, he declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

Mr. Caldwell 777
The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 777

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5:—

Mr. Caldwell ... ... 777 *The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight)* ... 779
Mr. Wyndham 778

Committee report progress; to sit again on Monday next.

Census (Ireland) Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk), in the Chair.]

Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) 779
The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) ... 779

Bill reported without amendment: read the third time, and passed.

Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill—Motion made and question proposed, "That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve into Committee on the Bill."

Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ... 779 *Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.)* 780
Mr. Atkinson ... ... 780 *Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.)* ... 780

Mr. SPEAKER having ascertained by the preponderance of voices that the majority of the House desired that the Committee should be deferred till Monday next, Committee deferred accordingly till Monday next.

Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Bill—Read a second time, and committed for Monday next 780

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One of the clock.

LORDS: FRIDAY, 30TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hammond (G. H.) Company Bill [Lords]—Committed 781

Scottish American Investment Company, Limited, Bill [H.L.]—A petition of Messrs. Faithfull and Owen, of Dacre House, Victoria Street, Westminster, solicitors, praying that Standing Order No. 91 may be dispensed with, and that the Bill may be read a second time; read and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 91 to be considered on Monday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said Bill... 781

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]—The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 781

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Paignton Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]—The consent of the Prince of Wales in right of his Duchy of Cornwall, signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 781

Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 781

Rhymney Iron Company Bill [H.L.]; Newton and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.] Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [H.L.]; Great Southern and Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments 781

London Sea Water Supply Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 27th of February last and 8th instant discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next... 781

Sunderland Corporation Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Harewood be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Blythswood; read and agreed to 782

Motherwell Water Bill [H.L.]; Church's Patent Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 782

Airdrie, Coatbridge, and District Water Bill; Hartlepool Gas and Water Bill; Morecambe Urban District Council (Gas) Bill; Ossett Corporation Gas Bill; Southport Extension and Tramways Bill; Southport Corporation Tramways Bill; Wakefield Corporation Market Bill: Wetherby District Water Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 782

Military Lands Provisional Order Bill—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed 782

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCANTILE MARINE (COLOUR TESTS)—Report on the sight-tests used in the Mercantile Marine for 1899 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C.-9248]): Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 782

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS)—I. Return of descriptions of qualifications of deputy lieutenants lodged during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. II. Return of deputy lieutenants displaced during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 783

PETITION.

Inebriates Amendment (Scotland) Bill [H.L.]—Petition in favour of, of County Council of Renfrew; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ... 783

Census (Ireland) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 42.) 783

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock.

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COMMONS: FRIDAY, 30TH MARCH, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely—Higham Ferrers Water Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 783

Hartlepool Gas and Water Bill; Southport Extension and Tramways Bill; Stockport Corporation Tramways Bill; Wakefield Corporation Market Bill; Wetherby District Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed ... 784

Brighton Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; a Clause added; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 784

Market Weighton Drainage and Navigation Bill—As amended, considered; a Clause added; an Amendment made: Bill to be read the third time 784

St. David's Railway (Abandonment) Bill—To be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April 784

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] [**Stamp Duties**].—Resolution reported:—"That it is expedient to authorise the imposition of the following Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society, namely, for and upon the First Memorial enrolled of the names of persons who shall be deemed, held, and taken to be Trustees of the Society, the sum of Five pounds; and upon every such Memorial in which the name of any person shall for the first time be inserted as a Trustee of the Society, the sum of Five pounds. Resolution agreed to. Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] that they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.—(*Dr. Farquharson*) 784

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Allerton, Much Woolton, Little Woolton, and Childwall, Barnet, Barnstaple, Birkenhead (Extension), Bonchurch, Boston, Briarfield, Egremont, Hyde, and Sudbury, ordered to be [illegible] in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury ... ...

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—"To confi[illegible] Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under th[illegible] Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Allerton, Much [illegible] Little Woolton, and Childwall, Barnet, Barnstaple, Birkenhe[illegible] sion), Bonchurch, Boston, Brierfield, Egremont, Hyde, and [illegible] presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be refer[illegible] Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.

Hastings Tramways Bill—Wellingborough and District Tramw[illegible] Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, a[illegible] printed... ... ...

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RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 3)—Mr. Hobhouse reported from the Committee on Group 3 of Railway, etc., Bills, That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at half-past eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table... 785

Hamilton, Motherwell, and Wishaw Tramways Bill—Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 785

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2)—Mr. Jeffreys reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills, that for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 785

London County Council (Compulsory Purchase of Land) Bill—Reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table... ... 785

PRIVATE BILLS (Group A.)—Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills, That Sir Gorge Pilkington, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the Sitting of the Committee this day; Report to lie upon the Table 785

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Corporation of the City of Lincoln with respect to tramways, and to authorise the Corporation to construct new tramways, and to work tramways within and without the city; and to borrow money; and for other purposes." Lincoln Corporation (Tramways) Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Melvin Batchlor Church for the manufacture of an improved compound for coating and decorating walls and other surfaces, and for the production of casts or mouldings, and for analogous purposes. Church's Patent Bill [Lords].

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords], —That they have come to the following resolution, namely, "That it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament" 786

Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; Church's Patent Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 786

PRIVATE BILLS (Group B)—Mr. Oldroyd reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday, 3rd April, at Eleven of the clock; Report to lie upon the Table 786

PETITIONS.

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT GAS—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 787

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Colonial Solicitors Bill—Petition of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 787

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Brechin, in favour; to lie upon the Table 787

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES)—Petition from Plumstead, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table... 787

Licensed Premises (Hours of Sale) (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 787

Licensing Acts Amendment (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 787

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Alnwick, against; to lie upon the Table. Petition from Peterborough, in favour; to lie upon the Table 787

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899—Petition from Plumstead, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 787

OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME—Petition from Baildon, for adoption; to lie upon the Table 787

Petroleum Bill—Petition from Manchester and Salford, in favour; to lie upon the Table 787

Public Houses (Scotland) Later Opening Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 787

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Greenwich; Eastbourne; and St. Leonards; to lie upon the Table ... 787

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill and Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petition from Newcastle-on-Tyne, in favour; to lie upon the Table 788

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Haughton; Silksworth; Ryhope (two); Murton; Hylton; Hetton (two); North Biddick; Fulwell; Silksworth (two); South Hetton; Hetton Downs; Newbottle; Coxgreen; Easington Lane; Weston-super-Mare; Burradon; Berwick-upon-Tweed; Newcastle-on-Tyne (three); Felling; Wardley; Brandon; Whitley Bay; Forest Gate; and Shepherd's Bush; to lie upon the Table 788

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (twenty-one); and Attercliffe; to lie upon the Table 788

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 788

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour from West Kent; Wheatley; Churchill; Salford; Sheffield; and Camberwell; to lie upon the Table 788

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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY—Return [presented 29th March] to be printed. [No. 115.] 788

MERCANTILE MARINE (COLOUR TESTS)—Copy presented of Report on the sight tests used in the Mercantile Marine for the year ended 31st December, 1899 (in continuation of [C. 9248]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 788

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS—Question, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 788

TRANSPORT—ALIEN SEAMEN IN BRITISH SHIPS—THE "CASPIAN"—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Macartney, Antrim, S.) 789

MARTIAL LAW AT THE CAPE—ALLEGED MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE—Question, Mr. Hazell (Leicester); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 790

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR FORCES—ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE—Questions, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) and Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 791

TELEGRAMS TO AND FROM SOLDIERS ON SERVICE—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 792

CONDUCT OF THE WAR—MEASURES FOR THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING—Question, Sir J. Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 792

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—BOOTS—Question, Mr. Howell (Denbigh Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 793

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND—WELSH GUARD OF HONOUR—Questions, Colonel Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs) and Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 793

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS AT HYDERABAD—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 794

ARMY PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.) 795

CRIMEAN PENSIONS—CASE OF PATRICK HENNESSY—Question, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 796

THE PARIS EXHIBITION—SUNDAY OPENING—Question, Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbright); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 797

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HONG KONG—REPORTED ABDUCTION OF A CHINESE REFORMER—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, Barnsley); Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 797

DISTURBANCES IN SHANTUNG AND PECHILI—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 797

CABLE COMPANIES' CHARGES—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Mr. Anstruther (St. Andrews Burghs) 797

DIVIDENDS ON GOVERNMENT SECURITIES—DATES OF PAYMENT—Question, Mr. M'Laren (Leicestershire, Bosworth); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 799

FACTORY ACTS—PARTICULARS CLAUSE—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) 799

GUY'S HOSPITAL—PRESCRIPTIONS ORDERED BY UNQUALIFIED STUDENTS—CASE OF MABEL BLANCH—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Sir M. White Ridley 800

PORTSKEWETT SEVERN TUNNELL SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Gray (West Ham, N.); Answer, The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) 800

SCHOOL BOARD JURISDICTION—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, Sir J. Gorst ... 801

POSTMEN'S FEDERATION—REFUSAL OF LEAVE TO EXECUTIVE OFFICERS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Anstruther ... 801

BIRMINGHAM TELEGRAPH CLERKS' GRIEVANCES—Question, Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 802

LIVERPOOL POST OFFICE—FINES FOR LATE ATTENDANCE—Question, Mr. Steadman; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 803

LIVERPOOL ASSISTANT POSTMEN—Question, Mr. Steadman; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 803

SCOTTISH COMMISSIONER OF LUNACY—Question, Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 804

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 806

MIGRATIONS OF SCOTTISH CROFTERS AND COTTERS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 806

FISHERY HARBOURS—COLLIESTON—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 806

ABERDEENSHIRE FISHERIES—OLD SLAINS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 807

SCOTTISH LUNACY BOARD—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 808

RETURN OF SCOTTISH EDUCATION EXPENDITURE—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 808

BALINTONE HARBOUR LIGHT—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 809

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CORK COUNTY—FORESHORE RIGHTS—Questions, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork), Captain Donelan (Cork, E.), Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.), Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.), and Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answers, Mr. Ritchie ... 811

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.), and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) ... 812

CASTLEBLANEY UNION DISPENSARY DOCTOR—Question, Mr. Daly (Monaghan, S.); Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) ... 812

IRISH POOR LAW DIETARY SCALES—CARRICKMACROSS WORKHOUSE—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Mr. Atkinson ... 813

CARRICKMACROSS URBAN AND RURAL BOUNDARIES—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, Mr. Atkinson ... 814

MULLINGAR COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Question, Mr. T. B. Curran (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson ... 815

CORK DISTRICT ASYLUM—CRIMINAL LUNATICS—Question, Mr. Crean (Queen's Co., Ossory); Answer, Mr. Atkinson ... 815

CORK COUNTY LAND HOLDINGS—SUB-LETTING—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, Mr. Atkinson ... 816

FLAX GROWING IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. Daly; Answer, The Vice President of the Department of Agriculturre for Ireland (Mr. Plunkett, Dublin Co., S.) ... 816

BALLYHEIGUE BAY—SUGGESTED BOATSLIP—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Plunkett ... 817

ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE FOR IRELAND—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Plunkett ... 817

CLOSURE MOTIONS IN COMMITTEE—Question, Sir Henry Howarth (Salford, S.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 818

THE POSTMASTER GENERALSHIP—SUCCESSOR TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 818

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe), and Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 819

ALIEN SEAMEN IN BRITISH SHIPS—[Motion for Adjournment].

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Havelock Wilson.*)

DISCUSSION :—

The Secretary to Admiralty (Mr. Macartney, Antrim, S.) ... 825
Sir U. Kay Shuttleworth (Lancashire, Clitheroe) ... 828
The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square) ... 829
Commander Bethell (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) ... 830

Question put and negatived.

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Power, Sir Reginald Hanson, and Sir Elliott Lees; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Macaleese, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, and Mr. Giles. Report to lie upon the Table 830

NEW BILLS.

SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT—Bill to amend The Shop Hours Act, 1892, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Steadman, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Woods ... ...

Shop Hours Act (1892) Amendment Bill—"To amend The Shop Hours Act, 1892," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 161.] 830

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL—Bill to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Richards, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Woods ... 830

Court of Criminal Appeal Bill—"To establish a Court of Criminal Appeal," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 162.] 830

VACCINATION.—Bill to declare the Law that no prosecution shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Channing, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Steadman... ... ...

Vaccination Bill.—"To declare the Law that no prosecution shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 163.] 831

SUPPLY.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [23rd March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

PHYSICAL AND MILITARY INSTRUCTION IN STATE-AIDED SCHOOLS.

DISCUSSION:—

Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.) 831
Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.) 838
The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) ... 840
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) ... 843
Sir Mark Stewart (Kirkcudbrightshire) 848

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BRITISH COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL INTERESTS IN CHINA.

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) ... 848
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 864
Mr. Moon (St. Panrcas, N.) 868
Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) 870
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) 875
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 879
Sir Edward Grey (Northumberland, Berwick) 889
Mr. Yerburgh (Chester)... ... 895
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 898
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) 901
Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 904

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY—Considered in Committee.

[The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.—CLASS I.

1. £29,000, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House.

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 905
The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) ... 906
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty)... 907
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 907
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) ... 908
Mr. Akers Douglas 909
Mr. Caldwell 909

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposd, "That a sum, not exceeding £73,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Mr. Gibson Bowles... ... 909
Mr. Caldwell 909

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £72,900, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Akers Douglas ... 911
Mr. John Burns 911
Mr. W. A. McArthur (Cornwall, St. Austell) 912

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Weir 913
Mr. Caldwell 913
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny) 913
Mr. Akers Douglas 913
Mr. Gibson Bowles 914
Mr. John Burns 915

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Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 915

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: MONDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Hamilton Burgh; Redhill Gas; Grantham Gas. And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Bray Urban District Council. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 917

Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Mountain Ash Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 917

Edinburgh Corporation Bill [H.L.]—The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 917

Burnley Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 917

Colonial Bank Bill—Reported without Amendment 917

Cowes Pier Bill [H.L.]; Southampton Harbour Bill [H.L.] Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 917

Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [H.L.]—Read the third time; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 917

New Russian Company Bill [H.L.]; Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Cleethorpes Gas Bill [H.L.]—Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons ... 918

Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [H.L.]—Read the third time; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 918

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Scottish American Investment Company, Limited, Bill [H.L.]—Standing Order No. 91 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to the said Bill; and Bill read the second time 918

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Spalding Urban District Council (Water) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read the first time and referred to the Examiners 918

Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.]; Neath Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Cork Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Essex Water Board Bill [H.L.]; South Essex Water Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—E. Lauderdale (*Chairman*), E. Carnwath, L. Barnard, L. Sudley (*E. Arran*), L. Farquhar; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Wednesday the second of May next, at eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 918

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—No. 2393. France (Trade of La Rochelle and District for the year 1899) 919

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Forty-seventh Report of the Charity Commissioners. Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 919

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND)—Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament chargeable on the revenues of India outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 31st March, 1900, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, etc.; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 919

PETITION.

EDUCATION (REVISED CODE)—Petition for postponement of the proposals recommended with regard to the assessment of the grants; of the Barrow-in-Furness School Board; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 919

Prevention of Corruption Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING]—Order of the Day for Second Reading read. Moved, That the Bill be now read the second time.—(*Lord Russell of Killowen.*)

DISCUSSION:—

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) ... 920
Lord James of Hereford ... 920
Lord Russell of Killowen ... 922

On Question, agreed to; Bill read the second time accordingly.

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—Amendments reported (according to order).

Lord Windsor 925
The Lord Privy Seal (Viscount Cross) 925

Bill to be read the third time on Thursday next.

Adjourned at ten minutes before Five of the clock, till To-Morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

COMMONS: MONDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) BILL (STANDING ORDER COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills pursuant to the Order of the House of the 29th day of March, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill. 925

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Government Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords]; Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [Lords]. Ordered That the Bills be read a second time 926

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow. 926

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE) — Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 926

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Bray Urban District Council—Ordered, That the Report be referred the Select Committee on Standing Orders 927

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill—Read the third time, and passed 927

Great Eastern Railway Bill—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.] 927

Great Northern Railway Blll; North Warwickshire Water Bill; Spalding Urban District Council (Water) Bill—Read the third time, and passed ... 927

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read a third time 927

Reading Corporation (Tramways) Bill; Southport Water Bill; Widnes and Runcorn Bridge Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 927

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Donegal Railway Bill [Lords]; Dundee Harbour Bill [Lords]; Lancashire Inebriates Acts Board Bill [Lords]; Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [Lords]; Otley Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed 927

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Dewsbury, Llandudno, Macclesfield, Manchester, Newton-in-Makerfield, Wigan. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Dewsbury, Llandudno, Macclesfield, Manchester, Newton-in-Makerfield, Wigan," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 164] 927

Bradford Corporation Bill—Ordered, that the Minutes of Evidence taken on the Bradford Water and Improvement Bill, in Session 1881, the Pudsey Gas Bill, in Session 1887, and the Bradford Tramways and Improvement Bill, in Session 1899, be referred to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills.—(*Mr. Caldwell*) 928

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120] 928

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121] 928

Harbour, &c., Bills—Copy ordered, "of the Report of the Board of Trade on the North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122] 928

Exeter Corporation Bill—Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 928

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to—Military Lands Provisional Order Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Commissioners of the burgh of Motherwell to provide an additional water supply to the burgh; and to make and maintain new and additional waterworks; and for other purposes." Motherwell Water Bill [Lords] 929

Motherwell Water Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 929

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petitions, in favour, from Dingwall; Chirnside; Nairn; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table ... 929

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Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Chiswick; and Northfleet; to lie upon the Table 929

Midwives Bill—Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 929

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 929

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Swindon, in favour; to lie upon the Table 929

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions, in favour, from Gateshead; J. Wallace Hood, junior, and others; Keighley; Glasgow; North Road; Chester-le-Street; Wrexham; Lincoln; Tynemouth; Pendleton; Exeter; Bacup; Newcastle-on-Tyne; and Folkestone; to lie upon the Table 929

Street Noises Bill—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table 929

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour from Lincoln; Llanhilleth; Wrexham; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table 930

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Copy presented, of Forty-seventh Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 930

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, &c.) (UNITED KINGDOM)—Return presented, relative thereto (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 78, of Session 1899) [Address, 31st January; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116] 930

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND)—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1900, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117] 930

CIVIL SERVICES, 1900–1901 (SUPERANNUATION AND RETIRED ALLOWANCES)—Copy presented, of Appendix to the Estimate for Civil Services, Class 6, Vote 1, containing a list of Superannuation and Retired Allowances payable on the 30th November, 1899 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 118] 930

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (NAVY VOTES)—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 24th March, 1900, under the Appropriation Act, 1899, authorising the temporary application of Surpluses on certain Navy Votes for the year 1899–1900, to meet excesses on certain other Navy Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119] 930

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896 (IRELAND)—Copy presented, of Return in pursuance of the Acts as regards Ireland for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 931

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND)—Return ordered, "showing, for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900, (1) the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively to the Revenue collected by Imperial officers; (2) the expenditure on English, Scotch, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively which are available for Imperial expenditure (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 317, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Lough.*) 931

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QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.) and Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 931

PROCLAMATIONS AGAINST LOOTING—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 932

ARMY DOCTORS AT THE FRONT—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 933

CENSORSHIP—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 933

MARTIAL LAW—Question, Mr. John Ellis; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 934

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS—INSUBORDINATE VOLUNTEERS—Question, Mr. M'Kenna (Monmouthshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 934

ARMY COMMISSIONS—PROMOTIONS FROM THE RANKS—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 935

SIR GEORGE WHITE AND THE WAR OFFICE—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 935

LORD METHUEN'S POSITION—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 937

TUGELA ENGAGEMENT—COLONEL LONG, R.A.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 937

ARMY CONTRACTS—SHIRTS—Question, Mr. Donal Sullivan (Westmeath, S.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.).

ARMY CONTRACTS—QUALIFICATIONS OF DIRECTORS' STAFF—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 938

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS—Question, Mr. Howell (Denbigh Boroughs); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 938

DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATE—Questions, Mr. Humphreys-Owen (Montgomeryshire) and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Wyndham... 939

CONVEYANCE OF HORSES BY RAIL—Question, Mr. Butcher (York); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 940

NEW FORGING PRESS AT WOOLWICH—Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 940

RIFLE RANGES IN ESSEX—Question, Mr. Gray (West Ham, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 941

THE BLAKELY GUN—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 941

JAMESON RAID—RHODES-HAWKSLEY CORRESPONDENCE—Question, Mr. Carson (Dublin University); Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) 941

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CORDITE—DANGER FROM SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION—EXPLOSION ON THE "Revenge"—Question, Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square 942

FLOGGING IN NAVAL PRISONS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. Goschen 943

DELAGOA BAY—CONTRABAND OF WAR, ETC. — Question, Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 943

TURKISH LOAN CONVERSION CONVENTIONS — Question, Mr. Pierpoint (Warrington); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 943

WESTERN AUSTRALIA — GOLDFIELDS DISTRICT PETITION — Question, Mr. Hogan (Tipperary, Mid); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 944

INDIAN CURRENCY—Question, Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) ... 945

CUSTOMS DUTIES ON SPIRIT — METHOD OF LEVYING—Question, Sir Charles Cameron; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 945

ISLINGTON BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 946

MONTGOMERYSHIRE WORKHOUSES—Question, Colonel Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 946

GREEN PARK SEAT ACCOMMODATION—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 947

TRAWLING IN PROHIBITED SCOTTISH WATERS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 947

SCOTTISH LUNACY BOARD MEETING—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 948

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS — Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 949

FAIR RENTS IN COUNTY KERRY — Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 949

UNITED IRISH LEAGUE MEETINGS AT DONERAILE—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 951

IRISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 951

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDERS—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 952

SCARIFF WATER SUPPLY — Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 952

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IRISH FORESHORE RIGHTS — LORD MIDDLETON AND THE BALLINACURRA FORESHORE — Questions, Capt. Donelan (Cork, E.) and Mr. Flynn; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) ... 953

R. I. C.—DISTRICT INSPECTOR TAYLOR—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 954

EDUCATION, &c., SCHEMES—ORDERS IN COUNCIL — Question, Mr. Carvell Williams (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 955

SEA FISHERIES BILL—Question, Mr. H. S. Foster (Suffolk, Lowestoft); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 955

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.), Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.), Mr. Grey, Mr. Flower (Bradford, W.), Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester), Capt. Donelan, and Capt. Sinclair; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 958

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 123.] Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 123.] Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 165] 958

Finance Bill—As Amended, considered.

New Clause—

"(1) Where any person dies from wounds inflicted or disease contracted, within twelve months before death, while on active service against an enemy, whether on sea or land, and was, when the wounds were inflicted or the disease contracted, either subject to the Naval Discipline Act or subject to military law, whether as an officer, non-commissioned officer, or soldier under Part Five of the Army Act, the Treasury may, if they think fit, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State or of the Admiralty as the case requires, remit, up to an amount not exceeding one hundred and fifty pounds in any one case, the whole or any part of the death duties (within the meaning of sub-section three of section thirteen of the Finance Act, 1894) leviable in respect of property passing upon the death of the deceased to his widow or children.

"(2) This section shall take effect in the case of any person dying since the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) ... 960
Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.) ... 961
Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Brightside) 961
Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 962
Mr. Sidney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 962
Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 962
Captain Pretyman (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 962
Mr. Butcher (York) 962
Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.) 963
The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) ... 963
Mr. William Moore (Antrim, N.) 963

Question put, and agreed to.

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Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'contracted,' to insert the words 'or by accident.'"—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.*) ... 963

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause amended, by inserting, in line 1, after the word "inflicted," the words "accident occurring," and by inserting, in line 4, after the word "inflicted," the words "the accident occurred."—*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. Grant Lawson 964

Clause amended by inserting in line 8, after the word "remit," the words "or in the case of duty paid, repay."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Amendment proposed—

"In line 12, after the word 'his' to insert the word 'mother.'"—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'mother' be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir M. Hicks-Beach ... 964
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 964
Mr. Broadhurst 965
Mr. James Lowther (*Kent, Thanet*) 965

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment made—

"In line 13, by leaving out the word 'children,' and inserting the words 'lineal descendants,' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last inserted, to insert the words 'or ascendants.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir M. Hicks-Beach 965

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment made—

"In line 13, by inserting, after the words last inserted, the words 'if the value of the property for estate duty so passing does not exceed £5,000.'"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Clause, as amended, added.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 3, to leave out from line 31 to the end of line 4, in page 4, both inclusive."—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Sir M. Hicks-Beach 966

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 37, to leave out from the beginning of Clause 12 to the word 'interest,' in line 41, inclusive."—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir M. Hicks-Beach ... 967
Capt. Pretyman (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 968
Mr. Gibson Bowles 968

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read a third time To-morrow.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Second Reading—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton) 978
Mr. Gordon (Elgin, Nairn) 983
Mr. Birrell (Fifeshire, E.)... 985
Mr. Elliot (Durham) ... 987
The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 990
Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 995
Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire) ... 999
Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) ... 1002
Mr. Carvell Williams (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 1003

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 125 ; Noes, 83. (Division List No 93.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1005
The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1007
Mr. Colville (Lanarkshire, N.E.) 1008
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) ... 1008

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 100 ; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 94).

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

April 2.] *Page*

Lunacy Board (Scotland) (Salaries, etc.) Bill—(Second Reading)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1019
Sir J. Stirling Maxwell (Glasgow, College) ... 1020
Sir T. Gibson-Carmichael (Edinburgh, Midlothian) 1021
Mr. Renshaw (Renfrew) ... 1023
Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 1024
Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick) 1026
Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) 1026
Col. Denny (Kilmarnock Burghs) 1029
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) ... 1030
Mr. A. Graham Murray ... 1031

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Army Annual Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 18, after the word 'may,' to insert the words 'on the recommendation of the man's commanding officer.'"—(*Mr. Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1033

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1034
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) ... 1034

Clause agreed to.

Schedule.

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1035
Mr. Wyndham 1036
Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1036

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Mr. Caldwell 1036
Mr. Wyndham 1037
Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) 1038

Question put and agreed to; Bill read the third time and passed.

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Palatine Court of Durham Bill [H.L.]—(Second Reading)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time."—(*The Attorney General.*)

Mr. Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) ... ... 1038 *Mr. Caldwell* (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 1039

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill—Considered in Committee.

[Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 4, to leave out Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Bill.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2) stand part of the clause."

The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley*) 1041

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 8, to leave out the words 'if he returns to' in order to insert the words 'in the event of his reinstatement in.'"—(*Mr. Parker-Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Jesse Collings 1042

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill reported, as amended, to be considered on Thursday.

Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill—As amended, considered.

Amendments made.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 24, after the word 'of,' to insert the words 'or arising out of.'"—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read the third time, and passed 1043

Naval Reserve (Mobilisation) Bill—[Second Reading]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 1043

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

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SUPPLY [30TH MARCH]—Resolutions reported:—

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1900–1901. CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £29,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £73,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens." Resolutions agreed to. 1043

Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Bill—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time and passed 1044

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow 1044

Town Councils (Scotland) Bill—Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c. 1044

BOILERS' REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION—The Select Committee was nominated of—Sir William Arrol, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Galloway, Sir Edward Gourley, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Heath, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. M'Ghee, Mr. Penn, Colonel Pilkington, and Mr. Renshaw.—(*Sir William Walrond*) 1044

NEW BILL.

EXECUTORS (SCOTLAND)—Bill to amend the Law of Executors in Scotland. Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Renshaw, Mr. Ure, Mr. Orr-Ewing, Mr. Caldwell, and Mr. Dewar 1044

Executors (Scotland) Bill—"To amend the Law of Executors in Scotland. Presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 166] 1044

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: TUESDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Southport Extension and Tramways; Stockport Corporation Tramways; Hartlepool Gas and Water; City and South London Railway. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1045

Dorking Water Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 1045

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Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]—The Queen's consent (in right of her Duchy of Lancaster) signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 1045

Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments ... 1045

Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham University Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments 1045

North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]—The order made on the 8th of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged 1045

Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Falkirk and District Water Bill [H.L.]; Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [H.L.]; Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [H.L.]—Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1045

North Warwickshire Water Bill—Brought from the Commons; read first time; and referred to the Examiners 1046

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Brighton and Preston United District, etc.) Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1899, to enable the school boards for Brighton and Preston United District, Liverpool, Plymouth, Salford, and Willesden to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts—Was presented by the Lord Privy Seal (V. Cross) for the Lord President (D. Devonshire); read first time; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 47) ... 1046

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA—Telegrams from Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War reporting:—1. A telegram addressed by him to the State Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic in reference to the abuse of the white flag; and 2. The reply of the President of the Orange Free State... 1046

INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS—Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom, including employers' associations, trade unions, boards of conciliation and arbitration, and workmen's co-operative societies ... 1046

LABOUR STATISTICS—Sixth Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1898–99 1046

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT, 1894—Return as regards Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1899—Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1046

SUPERANNUATION—Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Local Registrar of Bankruptcy in Belfast, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are requisite. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1046

Army (Annual) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read first time; to be printed; and to be read second time on Thursday next—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne*). (No. 43) 1047

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Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground) Bill (No. 44); Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill. (No. 45)—Brought from the Commons; read first time; and to be printed 1047

Copyright Bill [H.L.]; and Copyright Artistic Bill [H.L.]—The evidence taken before the Select Committee to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 46.)

PARIS EXHIBITION—SUNDAY OPENING.

Lord Kinnaird ... ... 1047 *The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury)* ... 1048

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely:—Southport and Lytham Tramroad Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1049

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely:—Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1049

Brighton Corporation Bill (Queen's Consent Signified)—Read the third time, and passed 1049

Market Weighton Drainage and Navigation Bill—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] 1049

Hoylake and West Kirby Improvement Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1049

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Bill (by Order)—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time ... 1049

BRAY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (EXTENSION OF TIME)—Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1050

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1050

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STANDING ORDERS—Resolutions reported from the Committee:—1. "That, in the case of the Portland Urban District Gas Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the Halifax Corporation Bill, Petition of the 'Elland-cum-Greetland Gas Company' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision, if the Committee on the Bill think fit." Resolutions agreed to 1050

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Bill—Reported, with amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1050

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP F)—Mr. SCHWANN reported from the Committee on Group F of Private Bills, that the parties opposing the Devonport Corporation Bill had stated that the evidence of Robert Vigers, of 4, Fredericks Place, Old Jewry, E.C., was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Robert Vigers do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock. Ordered, That Robert Vigers do attend the Committee on Group F of Private Bills To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock 1050

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Linlithgow; Newburgh; Glasgow; and Perth; to lie upon the Table ... 1051

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE)—Petition from Leicester, against adoption; to lie upon the Table 1051

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES)—Petition from Acton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1051

Licensed Premises (Hours of Sale) (Scotland) Bill—Petition of Free Church of Scotland Temperance Committee, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1051

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Norwich and Charlton Kings; to lie upon the Table 1051

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL)—Petition from Hammersmith, against adoption; to lie upon the Table 1051

Lunacy Bill—Petition of the National Poor Law Officers' Association of England and Wales, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1051

Money Lending Bill—Petition of the Incorporated Law Society of the United Kingdom, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1051

Public-Houses (Scotland) Later Opening Bill—Petition of the Free Church of Scotland Temperance Committee, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1051

April 2.]

Coal Mines (Prohibition of Chil
Electoral Disabilities (Military
the Commons; read first time;

Copyright Bill [H.L.]; and Copy
taken before the Select Commi
Members of this House; but no
members of the Committee, until

PARIS EXHIBITION—SUNDAY OPENING.
Lord Kinnaird 10

House adjourned at twe

COMMONS: TUESDAY,

PRIVATE BILL

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPL
upon the Table Report from one of the Ex
Bills, That, in the case of the following Bil
thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been
port and Lytham Tramroad Bill. Orde
second time ... ...

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NO
COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upo
the Examiners of Petitions for Private B
following Bill, originating in the Lords,
Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not
which are applicable thereto, have been
Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords].
read a second time ... ...

Brighton Corporation Bill (Queen's Consent
time, and passed ... ...

Market Weighton Drainage and Navigation
and passed. [New Title] ... ...

Hoylake and West Kirby Improvement
sidered; to be read the third time ... ...

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Bill
considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be

BRAY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (EXTENSION O
referred to the Select Committee on Standin

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No.
Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Gov
Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government P
Read a second time, and committed ...

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Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill--Petition from Keighley, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1052

Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act (1895) Amendment Bill—Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table 1052

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Haddenham, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1052

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Radcliffe; Brampton; Bolton; Reading; Bedford; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; York; Portsmouth; Wandsworth; Sunderland (twenty-three); Wolsingham; Hartlepool; and Walton-le-Dale; to lie upon the Table 1052

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (eighteen); and London; to lie upon the Table ... 1052

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Chester-le-Street; Bedford; York; Chesterfield; Reading; Portsmouth; and Radcliffe; to lie upon the Table 1052

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATIONS—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Local Registrar of Bankruptcy in Belfast, Professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1052

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2393 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1052

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT)—Copy presented of Sixth Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom 1898–9 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1053

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT) (DIRECTORY OF INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS)—Copy presented, of Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom, including Employers' Associations, Trade Unions, Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration, and Workmen's Co-operative Societies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1053

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th February; *Mr D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125] 1053

POLICE (SCOTLAND)—Copy presented, of Forty-second Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, being for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1053

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877—Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 31st March, 1900, giving effect to a Rule of Court [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1053

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1900–1901) (FINAL FIGURES)—Copy ordered, "of Statement Showing the Revenue and Expenditure for 1899–1900, and the Estimated Expenditure for 1900–1901."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124] 1053

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QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TRANSPORTS—RETURN — Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square) 1053

EXPLOSIVE AND EXPANSIVE BULLETS — Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... 1054

FEMALE NURSES WITH THE TROOPS — Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1054

HORSE TRANSPORT—SUPPLY OF VETERINARY STORES—Question, Mr. Faber (York); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1055

ARMY CONTRACTS — BOOTS — Questions, Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) and Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.) 1055

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS—Question, Mr. Howell (Denbigh Boroughs); Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight)... 1056

WARM CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1056

ARMY COMMISSIONS FOR COLONISTS—Question, General Laurie; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1057

RIFLE COMPANY MOUNTED INFANTRY, 4TH CAVALRY BRIGADES — Question, Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1058

EMPLOYMENT OF VOLUNTEER OFFICERS AT TERRITORIAL DEPOTS—Question, Mr. Cornwallis (Maidstone); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1058

YEOMANRY TRAINING — OFFICERS' EXPENSES — Question, Colonel Welby (Taunton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1058

RE-ENLISTMENT OF MILITIAMEN—BOUNTY PAYMENTS—Question, Gen. Laurie; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1059

FOREIGN SERVICE RIFLES — Question, Mr. Hedderwick (Wicks Burghs); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1059

ARMY VETERINARY DEPOT—Question, Capt. Jessel (St. Pancras, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 1059

BRITISH ARMAMENTS CORPORATION—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1060

PICRIC ACID—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. J. Powell-Williams 1060

NAVY—PENSIONS OF SEAMEN AND STOKERS—Question, Sir E. T. Gourley (Sunderland); Answer, Mr. Goschen 1060

NEW NAVAL 12-INCH GUN, MARK IX—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Mr. Goschen 1061

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NAVAL ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—STOREKEEPERS GENERAL—Question, Mr. Thornton (Clapham); Answer, Mr. Goschen 1062

DELAGOA BAY ARBITRATION—Question, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)... 1062

JAMAICA—BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA—Question, Mr. Brodie Hoare (Hampstead); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1062

CHINA—"OPEN DOOR" POLICY—Question, Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1063

CHINA—BRITISH GUNBOATS ON THE WEST RIVER—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1064

FINANCE BILL—STATISTICS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—Question, Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) 1064

BURIAL DISPUTE IN WALES—CASE OF DAVID VAUGHAN—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley) 1066

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEES—FEMALE MEMBERS—Question, Mr. Jebb (Cambridge University); Answer, The Vice-President of the Committee on Council (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) 1066

THE NEW EDUCATION CODE—Question, Sir W. Hart-Dyke (Kent, Dartford); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1066

TRAMWAY CONSTRUCTION BY MUNICIPALITIES—Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1067

DOGS REGULATION BILL—Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1067

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1068

FOREIGN TRAWLERS IN THE MORAY FIRTH—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1068

SCOTTISH PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Renshaw (Renfrew, W.); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray... 1069

COWDENBEATH LEVEL CROSSING—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1069

CORK CUSTOM HOUSE—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1070

KERRY ORDNANCE SURVEY—Question, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool West, Derby) 1070

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ITINERANT PREACHERS AT BOURNEA—Questions, Mr. Hogan (Tipperary, Mid) and Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1070

COMPENSATION TO A KERRY POLICE SERGEANT—Questions, Mr. Flavin, Mr. William Johnson (Belfast, S.), Capt. Donelan (Cork, E.), and Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 1071

LAND COMMISSION—SITTINGS AT CAHIRCIVEEN—TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN) PROPERTY—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1073

ARDSTRAW ASSISTANT SCHOOL TEACHER—Question, Sergeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1073

LAND PURCHASES IN COUNTY CORK—Question, Mr. Maurice Healy (Cork); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1074

ROAD MAINTENANCE IN IRELAND—Question, Capt. Donelan; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1075

IRELAND AND WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION—CASE OF JAMES CARROLL—Questions, Mr. Austin (Limerick) and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 1075

IRISH INEBRIATES ACT—ENNIS PRISON—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1076

IRISH EDUCATION BILLS—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1076

CHAIRMEN OF IRISH COUNCILS AND THE COMMISSION OF THE PEACE—Question, Mr. Flavin; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1076

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners) Bill—Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments and an Amended Title: changed to Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners and others) Bill. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.] Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 126.] Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Tuesday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 167] 1077

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. WODEHOUSE reported from the Committee of Selection, that they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Lord Dalkeith, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Giles, Captain Pretyman, and Mr. J. W. Wilson; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Baird, Sir Reginald Hanson, Sir Elliott Lees, Sir John Colomb, and Sir William Houldsworth. Report to lie upon the Table 1077

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Cowes to construct a Pier and other works; to borrow moneys therefor; and for other purposes." Cowes Pier Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Southampton Harbour Board; and for other purposes; Southampton Harbour Bill [Lords].

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Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the Great Berkhampstead Waterworks Company." Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to alter the capital of the New Russia Company, Limited; and for other purposes." New Russia Company Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act for authorising the Army and Navy Investment Trust Company, Limited, to prepare and carry into effect a scheme or schemes of arrangement with its stockholders, or with the holders of either class of stock, and to reduce its capital; and for other purposes." Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to Authorise the Barry Railway Company to provide and work steam vessels, and to subscribe to the funds of any steamship company; and for other purposes." Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to convert the capital of the Cleethorpes Gas Company; to raise additional capital; to construct works; and for other purposes." Cleethorpes Gas Bill [Lords].

And also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the District Lunacy Board for the Edinburgh Lunacy District to construct railways, waterworks, sewerage, and other works in the county of Linlithgow; to acquire lands for the protection of their water supply; and for other purposes." Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [Lords] 1077

Cowes Pier Bill [Lords]; Southampton Harbour Bill [Lords]; Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [Lords]; New Russia Company Bill [Lords]; Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [Lords]; Barry Railway (Steam (Vessels) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1078

Cleethorpes Gas Bill [Lords]; Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1079

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (No. 3)—Bill to amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir Charles Cameron, Sir William Priestley, Sir William Arrol, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Nicol.

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment (No. 3) Bill—"To amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 168] 1079

SMALLER DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND)—Bill to amend the law relating to the tenancy of Smaller Dwellings in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir William Arrol, Colonel Denny, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Faithfull Begg, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

Smaller Dwellings (Scotland) Bill—"To amend the law relating to the tenancy of Smaller Dwellings in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 169] 1079

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TEMPERANCE REFORM, THREEFOLD OPTION (SCOTLAND)—Bill to effect direct local control of the Liquor Traffic in Scotland and other Temperance Reforms, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. James Campbell, Sir Mark Stewart, Sir Walter Thorburn, Mr. Ure, and Mr. Yoxall.

Temperance Reform, Threefold Option (Scotland) Bill—"To effect direct local control of the Liquor Traffic in Scotland and other Temperance Reforms," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 16th May, and to be printed. [Bill 170] 1079

THE FAMINE IN INDIA—[Resolution]—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, and the extreme impoverishment of large masses of the population, a searching inquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague; and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines."—(*Sir William Wedderburn.*)

Mr. Samuel Smith (*Flintshire*) 1084

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of Question, in order to add the words 'this House, while deeply sympathising with its Indian fellow-subjects in the sufferings which plague and famine have inflicted upon them, is of opinion that it may safely be left to the Government of India to carry out any modification of the land tenure and industrial system which experience may have shown to be likely to mitigate the effects of famine and epidemic disease.'"—(*Sir Lewis McIver.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

Sir Mancherjee Bhownuggree (*Bethnal Green, N.E.*) ... 1101
Mr. Maclean (*Cardiff*) ... 1106
Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 1111
The Secretary of State for India (*Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing*) 1117
Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 1127

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 72; Noes, 155. (Division List No. 95.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House, while deeply sympathising with its Indian fellow-subjects in the sufferings which plague and famine have inflicted upon them, is of opinion that it may safely be left to the Government of India to carry out any modification of the land tenure and industrial system which experience may have shown to be likely to mitigate the effects of famine and epidemic disease.

COLONIES (REPRESENTATION IN THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT)—(Resolution).

Mr. Hedderwick (*Wick Burghs*) 1131

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (*Mr. Herbert Robertson, Hackney, S.*). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, in the interests of the Empire, that the colonies should be admitted to some direct representation in the Imperial Parliament."—(*Mr. Hedderwick.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) 1141
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1144
Mr. Hedderwick... 1152

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (IRELAND)—(Resolution).

Serjeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) 1153

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and forty Members being found present,

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the present system of Private Bill Legislation for Ireland constitutes a serious grievance to the interests of suitors from that country, and requires alteration, with a view to economising the time of Parliament, preventing delay, and reducing the heavy costs and charges attending the promotion of private Bills at present, and that legislation with this view is urgently required."—(*Mr. Serjeant Hemphill.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) ... ... 115[illegible]
Sir James Haslett (Belfast, N.) 1161
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 1163
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 1164
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland) 1165
Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 1166
Mr. J. H. M. Campbell (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) 1168
Mr. David MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale) 1170
The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1172

Question put, and agreed to.

County Courts Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Mr. Warr (Liverpool, East Toxteth 1175
Mr. Monk (Gloucester) 1175
Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.) ... 1176

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Tuesday, 1st May.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS)—Address for "Return showing the estimated position as regards Capital Expenditure of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1900, and the proposed Expenditure thereon during 1900–1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock.

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COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Higham Ferrers Water Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed 1177

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT GAS—Report [3rd April] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brymer, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Strachey 1177

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Deer; and Forres; to lie upon the Table 1177

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE)—Petition of the School Board for London, for alteration, and for inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table 1177

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from St. Pancras; and Guildford; to lie upon the Table 1177

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Hull; Southampton; Seer Green; Sheffield; Cheetham Hill; Radford; Ratcliff; Nottingham; and Sabden; to lie upon the Table 1177

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (sixteen); and Temperance Committee of the Free Church of Scotland; to lie upon the Table 1177

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Canonmill, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1177

School Board Elections (London) Bill—Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1177

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Gunnislake: Ratcliff; Nottingham; and Temperance Committee of the Free Church of Scotland; to lie upon the Table 1178

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—Copy presented, of Telegrams from Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War, reporting (1) a telegram addressed by him to State Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic in reference to the abuse of the White Flag, and (2) the Reply of the President of the Orange Free State [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1178

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales for 1897, Part I. (Criminal) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1178

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ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127.] 1178

Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Amendment Bill—Order for Second Reading read. Mr. SPEAKER called the attention of the House to the fact that the provisions of the Bill were identical with those of the Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill which had been read a second time on 21st March last.

Whereupon the Order was discharged, and the Bill withdrawn... ... 1178

Tenants in Towns Improvement (Ireland) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Macaleese.*)

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Smith-Barry.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. J. H. M. Campbell (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) 1207
Mr. Seale-Hayne (Devonshire, Ashburton) ... 1218
Mr. Vicary Gibbs (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) ... 1219
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1220
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester) ... 1221
The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1221
Serjeant Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)... 1227

Question put.

The House divided—Ayes, 100; Noes, 188. (Division List No. 96.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed 1231

Public Petitions Committee—Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1231

Lee Conservancy Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1231

Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 1231

London and South-Western Railway Bill; St. David's Railway (Additional Powers) Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Hastings Harbour Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1231

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Maidenhead Gas Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1232

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—On the Motion for Adjournment—The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1232

Adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.

LORDS: THURSDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Ossett Corporation Gas, Wetherby District Water, Wakefield Corporation Market. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1233

LONDON AND SAN FRANCISCO BANK—Petition of the London and San Francisco Bank, Limited, under the common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to reduce the capital and extend the powers of the London and San Francisco Bank, Limited, and for other purposes; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 1233

Rugeley Gas Bill—Reported with Amendments 1233

Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments 1233

Sunderland Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Select Committee, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill: Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 1233

Grantham Gas Bill; Redhill Gas Bill—Read 2^a, and committed 1233

Hamilton Burgh Bill—Read 2^a, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1233

East Stirlingshire Water Bill [H.L.]; Newport Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Read 3^a; Amendments made; Bills passed, and sent to the Commons ... 1234

Paignton Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Southern and Western Railway Bill [H.L.]—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1234

Colonial Bank Bill—Read 3^a, and passed 1234

Brighton Corporation Bill; Market Weighton Drainage and Navigation Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners 1234

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North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Morley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Rotherham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Rawmarsh Urban District Council (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, namely: E. Jersey (chairman), E. Yarborough, L. Lawrence, L. Northbourne; L. Ludlow; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday the 2nd of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills... 1234

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILLS—Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess 1235

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

POLICE (SCOTLAND)—Forty-second Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended 31st December, 1899 ... 1235

AUSTRALIA—Papers relating to the Federation of the Australian Colonies ... 1235

JAMAICA—Further Correspondence relating to the Finances and Government of the Island of Jamaica (in continuation of [C. 9412] and [C. 9413] July, 1899) 1235

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—No. 2394. United States (Charlestown and District). No. 2395. Chile (Coquimbo) 1235

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Part I. Criminal Statistics: Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminal lunatics, for the year 1898. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table... 1235

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889—Abstract of Accounts for the University of St. Andrews for the year ended 30th September, 1899, being the annual report on the state of the finances of the University under the provisions of the Act 1235

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889—Minutes of Committee of Council on Education, sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act for—1. County of Buckingham (8th minute). 2. District of Beckenham 1235

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND) (RULES)—Order in Council, dated 30th March, 1900, giving effect to a rule of court. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1236

PETITION.

EDUCATION (REVISED CODE, 1900)—Petition for amendment of, of the London School Board: read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1236

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NEW BILL.

British Museum Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to authorise the trustees of the British Museum to deposit copies of local newspapers with local authorities, and to dispose of valueless printed matter—Was presented by the Viscount Peel; read 1[a]; to be printed; and to be read 2[a] on the second day after the Easter Recess. (No. 48.) 1236

Ancient Monuments Protection Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1[a]; and to be printed. (No. 49.) 1236

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS—Question, The Earl of Kimberley; Answer, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) 1236

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 5TH APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely: Metropolitan District Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1237

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, namely: City of London Electric Lighting Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1237

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely: Church's Patent Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1237

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill—Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed 1237

Reading Corporation (Tramways) Bill; Southport Water Bill—Read the third time, and passed 1237

Central London Railway Bill—Ordered, That, in the case of the Central London Railway Bill, Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Bill accordingly read a second time and committed 1237

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Portland Urban District Gas Bill—"To empower the Urban District Council of Portland to supply gas, and to provide for the transfer of the undertaking of the Portland Gas Light and Coke and Coal Company, Limited, to the Council, and to make further provision in regard to the finance of the said district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time 1238

Dublin Corporation Bill and Clontarf Urban District Council Bill—Resolution of the House of the 19th day of March relative to the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill, which was ordered to be communicated to the Lords, and the Message from the Lords of the 23rd day of March signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution, read.

Ordered, That the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Select Committee of four Members nominated by the Committee of Selection to be joined with a Committee of four Lords.

Ordered, That all Petitions in favour of or against the Bills, presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard in favour of or against the Bills, and Counsel heard in support of the Bills.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill have been committed to four Members of this House, to be joined with a Committee of four Lords, pursuant to the Resolution of the House of the 19th day of March, and to the Message from the Lords of the 23rd day of March signifying their concurrence thereto.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*) 1238

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) AMALGAMATION (by Order).—Lords Message [30th March], "That it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament," considered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said Resolution."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

DISCUSSION:—

Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) ... 1239
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (*Kilkenny*) 1240
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 1241
The Chairman of Committees (*Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith*) 1241
Mr. Power (*Waterford, E.*) 1244
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 1245
The Attorney General for Ireland (*Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.*) 1247
Mr. Molloy (*King's County, Birr*) 1248
Mr. William Johnston (*Belfast, S.*) 1249
Mr. Blake (*Longford, S.*) ... 1249
Mr. Carson (*Dublin University*) 1250
Mr. Wolff 1250

Question put and agreed to

Ordered, That a message be sent to the Lords to acquaint them with this Resolution.

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Midland Railway Bill—Reported with Amendments. Reported to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1250

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Kingston-upon-Thames; and for other purposes." Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [Lords]. Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide an additional supply of water to the burgh of Falkirk and districts and places adjacent, and for the construction and maintenance of new and additional works; to extend the limits of compulsory supply; to confer further powers on the Falkirk and Larbert Water Trustees; and for other purposes." Falkirk and District Water Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868; to confer further powers on the Guardians of the Birmingham Proof House; and for other purposes." Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [Lords]. And, also a Bill intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Alexander Imschenetzky for an invention for manufacture of fireproof and insulating compounds known as Uralite." Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [Lords] 1250

Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [Lords]; Falkirk and District Water Bill [Lords]; Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [Lords]; Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 1251

Devonport Corporation Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1251

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE)—Petitions for alteration, from Barrow-in-Furness, and Brighton and Preston; to lie upon the Table 1251

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petitions in favour, from Lymington and Hanley, to lie upon the Table 1251

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from West Kirby and Mansfield Woodhouse; to lie upon the Table 1251

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Newcastle; Dewsbury; Melbourne; Spennymoor; Binchester; Gunnislake; South Gasforth; Tudhoe (two); Ferry Hill; Swansea; Ryehope; and Wishaw; to lie upon the Table 1251

Shops Bill—Petition from Glasgow in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1252

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Melbourne; Swansea; Middlesbrough; and Brotton; to lie upon the Table... 1252

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AUSTRALIA—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Federation of the Australian Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1252

JAMAICA—Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to the Finances and Government of the Island of Jamaica (in continuation of [C. 9412] and [C. 9413] July, 1899) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1252

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EXPLOSIONS (EXPLOSION AT NEW HARBOUR WORKS, DOVER)—Copy presented, of Report by Captain M. B. Lloyd, R.A., Her Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of gunpowder on the works of the new Admiralty Harbour at East Cliff, near Dover, on the 14th January, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1252

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the Universty for the year ended 30th September, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.] 1252

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2394 and 2395 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1252

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEES (WOMEN MEMBERS)—Return ordered, "of the number of Women on the respective Technical Instruction Committees of County and County Borough Councils and on Committees under Clause VII. of the Directory of the late Department of Science and Art."—(*Mr. Jebb.*) 1253

TRADE UNION FUNDS—Return ordered, "of the trade union societies or branches which have been permitted by the National Debt Commissioners to deposit in savings banks without restrictions as to amount."—(*Mr. Woods.*)... 1253

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES—Return ordered "of the amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other public offices on the 31st day of March, 1900, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 147, of session 1899):—

£2¾ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	Local Loans £3 per Cent. Stock.	Guaranteed Land Stock.	Book Debt, 55 and 56 Vic. c. 26.	Other Securities.		
						Treasury Bills.	Annuities for terms of years.	Local Loans Bonds.

—(*Mr. Hanbury*) 1253

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TREATMENT OF BOER PRISONERS—Questions, Mr. Labouchere (Northampton), Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny), and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1253

COUNT ADALBERT STERNBERG—Questions, Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.), Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.), and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1254

BOER THREATS TO SHOOT LOYAL ENGLISH BURGHERS—Question, Mr. Gordon (Elgin and Nairn); Answer, the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1255

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CITY IMPERIAL VOLUNTEERS—CYCLIST CORPS EQUIPMENT—Question, Mr. Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1255

ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS — STATISTICS—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 1256

ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS—ELIGIBILITY OF ROYAL MARINES—Question, Commander Young (Berkshire, Wokingham); Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1257

RESERVISTS—SECTION D—PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Mackenna (Monmouthshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1257

RESERVISTS' FAMILIES PAY—DATES OF PAYMENT—Question, Mr. Cameron Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1257

RESERVISTS IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE—Question, Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley) 1258

WAR LOAN—IRISH SUBSCRIPTIONS—Question, Mr. Carson (Dublin University); Answer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 1258

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS—COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1259

ARMY CONTRACTS FOR CYCLES—SHANNON CYCLE WORKS, LIMITED—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1259

YEOMANRY OFFICERS—ALLOWANCE FOR PERMANENT DUTIES—Question, Mr. W. F. D. Smith (Strand, Westminster); Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1260

VOLUNTEER CAMPS—SPECIAL CAPITATION GRANT—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1260

VOLUNTEER CYCLIST COMPANIES—CAPITATION GRANT—Question, Colonel Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1260

RIFLE RANGES—MULLINGAR—Question, Mr. Donal Sullivan (Westmeath, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1260

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT—STATUS OF OFFICERS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1261

ARMY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS—PHYSICAL FITNESS OF COMMANDING OFFICERS—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1261

DELAGOA RAILWAY ARBITRATION—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1262

SUGAR BOUNTIES—DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS—Question, Colonel Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1262

CHINESE BLUE BOOKS—MAPS—Question, Mr. Faithfull Begg (Glasgow, St. Rollox); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1262

FOREIGN OFFICE INTRODUCTIONS TO TRAVELLING BRITISH SUBJECTS—Question, Mr. Faithfull Begg; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1263

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DEATH DUTIES—NEW SOUTH WALES LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Renshaw (Renfrewshire, W.); Answer, Sir M. Hicks Beach 1263

TRUST INVESTMENTS—CANADIAN GOVERNMENT SECURITIES—Question, Mr. Faithfull Begg; Answer, Sir M. Hicks Beach 1264

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT—CLAUSE 3—Question, Mr. Woods (Essex, Walthamstow); Answer, Mr. Jesse Collings 1264

PRESERVATIVES IN CREAM—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) 1265

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE—ARGENTINE IMPORTS PROHIBITED—Question, Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk); Answer, Mr. Long ... 1266

WORKMEN'S TRAINS IN LONDON SUBURBS—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1266

RAILWAY FATALITIES BETWEEN CHARING CROSS AND NEW CROSS—Question, Mr. John Burns (Battersea); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1267

EXCURSION STEAMERS—Question, Mr. Tritton (Lambeth, Norwood); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1267

BETHNAL GREEN BOARD OF GUARDIANS—GRATUITIES—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) ... 1267

ROYAL COMMISSION ON SEWAGE DISPOSAL—Question, Mr. J. W. Wilson (Worcestershire, N.); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 1268

VACCINATION OF PUPIL TEACHERS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor (Donegal, E.); Answer, The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) 1269

TELEPHONING CABLEGRAMS—Question, Mr. Charles M'Arthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston 1270

BRIGHTON TELEGRAPH OFFICE—PROMOTION OF TELEGRAPHISTS—Question, Mr. Loder (Brighton); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1270

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS' PENSIONS—Question, Mr. Austin (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1271

ENNIS SUB-POST OFFICE—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1272

BOAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FOYNES AND KILRUSH—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1272

PAUPER LUNATICS IN BELFAST—Question, Mr. Wolff (Belfast, E.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1273

BALLYSHANNON PETTY SESSIONS—MR. MOONEY, J.P.—Question, Mr. William Johnston (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1273

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CARNDONAGH LOAN FUND SOCIETY—RECEIVER'S REMUNERATION—Question, Mr. T. B. Curran (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1273

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT—DUBLIN CASE—Question, Mr. Austin; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour. 1274

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—Motion made and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Adjourned Debate on the Motion for the appointment of a Joint Committee on Municipal Trading, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, Sittings of the House."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 185; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 97.)

Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill—[SECOND READING].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary Ritchie.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire) 1277
Mr. Lyttleton (Warwick and Leamington) ... 1280
Sir J. W. Pease (Durham, Barnard Castle) ... 1283
Mr. Tomlinson (Preston) ... 1286
Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Brightside) 1289
Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley) ... 1294
Mr. Renshaw (Renfrewshire, W.)... 1306
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1307
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) ... 1312
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 1317
Mr. Purvis (Peterborough) ... 1319
Mr. Brodie Hoare (Hampstead) ... 1322
Mr John Burns (Battersea) ... 1322
Mr. Gray (West Ham, N.) ... 1326

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. Caldwell, Lanark, Mid). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

Mr. Gray 1327
Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.) 1331
Col. Blundell (Lancashire, Ince) 1333
Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth)... 1334
Mr. Butcher (York) ... 1336
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) ... 1339
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 1341
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny) 1341
Mr. Colville (Lanarkshire, N.E.) 1343

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

MUNICIPAL TRADING—Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [29th March], "That a Select Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

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DISCUSSION :—

Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) 1343
Sir Samuel Hoare (Norwich) 1353
Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1358
Sir Blundell Maple (Camberwell, Dulwich) 1362
Mr. Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.) 1364
Mr. Goddard (Ipswich) 1366

Amendment proposed—

"In line two, after the word 'be' to insert the words 'nominated by the Committee of Selection.'"—(*Lord Balcarres.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.)... 1370
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1370

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 141 ; Noes, 67. (Division List No. 98.)

Ordered, That a Select Committee of five Members of this House, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath appointed a Committee of five Members to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction ; and to request that their Lordships will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of this House.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill—As amended, considered ; an Amendment made ; Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 1376

Beer Retailers' and Spirit Grocers' Licences (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill—Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow 1376

LONDON GOVERNMENT (BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH ORDER IN COUNCIL)—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her Assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th day of March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Hammersmith, the incorporation thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith, unless Amendments are made therein (1) to omit so much of sub-paragraphs (a) and (c) of Clause 3 as relates to the Nos. 2, 3, and 5 on the map described in the Draft Order, so as to exclude that portion of the parish of St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington, as is coloured red on the said map, and to retain in the new Borough of Hammersmith all now belonging to the said borough, except the portion to be transferred to carry out the boundary mutually agreed upon by the Vestries of the Parishes of Hammersmith and St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington ; and (2) to substitute the words 'Town Clerk of the Borough' for the words 'Clerk of the County Council' throughout Clause 3, Sub-section (4)."—(*General Goldsworthy.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1377
Mr. Sharpe (*Kensington, N.*) 1378
Earl Percy (*Kensington, S.*) 1378
The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Chaplin, Lincs., Sleaford*) 1378

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LONDON GOVERNMENT (BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON ORDER IN COUNCIL)—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her Assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th day of March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Islington, the incorporation thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith, unless amendments are made therein (1) to substitute the words 'Town Clerk of the Borough' for the words 'Clerk of the County Council' throughout Clause 3, Sub-section (4), and to substitute the word 'Borough' for 'County' in the last line of such sub-section; (2) to enlarge the scale of the maps referred to in the Draft Note, or to attach an itinerary to such maps, so that the dotted line indicating the boundary may enable it to be ascertained by measurement or description on which side of the boundary sewers, gas mains, water mains, electric mains, and the like are situated, and to facilitate many other purposes connected with local government."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

Mr. Chaplin ... ... 1380 *Mr. Cohen* 1380

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at five minutes before One of the clock.

LORDS: FRIDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1900.

APPEAL COMMITTEE—First Report from; read and agreed to 1381

SAT FIRST—The Lord Mendip (*V. Clifden*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman 1381

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—Airdrie, Coatbridge, and District Water Trust; Cheshire Lines Committee; Great Eastern Railway; Spalding Urban District Council (Water). The same were ordered to lie upon the Table 1381

Hemel Hempstead Corporation (Water) Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 1381

Ipswich Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Reported with Amendments 1381

Pontefract Park Bill—Reported without Amendment 1381

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Walsall Corporation Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.] and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Walsall Corporation Bill [H.L.] and the South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 1381

North-Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]—The order made on Tuesday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged 1382

Hartlepool Gas and Water Bill—Read 2ª, and committed 1382

Southport Extension and Tramways Bill—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection... 1382

Stockport Corporation Tramways Bill; City and South London Railway Bill—Read 2ª, and committed 1382

Glasgow District Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to order) ... 1382

Rhymney Iron Company Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]; Mountain Ash Water Bill [H.L.]; Burnley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Edinburgh Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham University Bill [H.L.]; Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1382

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill; Reading Corporation (Tramways) Bill; Southport Water Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1382

Railways (Ireland) Amalgamation Bills—Message from the Commons that they concur in the Resolution of this House communicated to them on the 30th of March last, that it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament as desired by this House 1383

Dublin Corporation Bill; Clontarf Urban District Council Bill—Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee, to consist of Four Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider the said Bills, and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House 1383

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS)—Minute, dated 6th April, 1900, establishing higher elementary schools 1383

SOUTH AFRICA—Proclamation issued by the High Commissioner for South Africa, on 19th March, 1900, relating to alienations of property by the Government of the South African Republic or of the Orange Free State made subsequently to the date of the Proclamation 1383

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EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT NEW HARBOUR WORKS, DOVER)—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Captain M. B. Lloyd, Her Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of gunpowder on the works of the New Admiralty Harbour at East Cliff, near Dover, on the 14th January, 1900. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1383

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES—Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27 and 28 Victoria, chap. 43, 45th and 46th Victoria, chap. 51, and 50th and 51st Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended 31st December, 1899. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1383

MUNICIPAL TRADING—Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee, to consist of five Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction, and to request that this House appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House 1384

Army (Annual) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Secretary of State for War (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 1384

Moved, That the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly; Committee negatived; Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—[THIRD READING]—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Lord Windsor 1385

Third Reading (by leave of the House) put off to Monday next.

Census (Ireland) Bill—Read 2ª (according to order); Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 1385

YESTERDAY'S ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—PERSONAL EXPLANATION—On the motion that the House adjourn during pleasure—

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 1385

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed by the Earl of Morley.

Finance Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be read 2ª on Monday next (the Marquess of Salisbury); and Standing Order No XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with 1386

Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 50.) 1386

House adjourned at Eleven of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, FRIDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Bill—Read the third time, and passed 1386

Hoylake and West Kirby Improvement Bill—Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed 1386

Widnes and Runcorn Bridge Bill—Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed 1386

Hastings Tramways Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1386

Huddersfield Corporation Tramways Bill—As amended, to be considered upon Monday next 1386

Wolverhampton, Essington, and Cannock Chase Junction Railway Bill—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1387

Manchester and Liverpool Electric Express Railway Bill—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1387

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bredbury and Romiley, Bridlington, Cheadle and Gatley, Hebburn, Kendal, Long Eaton, Lytham, Ormesby, Sleaford, and Tunstall (with Goldenhill and Chell), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bredbury and Romiley, Bridlington, Cheadle and Gatley, Hebburn, Kendal, Long Eaton, Lytham, Ormesby, Sleaford, and Tunstall (with Goldenhill and Chell)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 171]... 1387

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop Auckland, Caterham (with Warlingham), Cowpen, Grantham, Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton, Ogmore Valley, Redruth, St. Helens (Isle of Wight), South Blyth, and Weybridge, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop Auckland, Caterham (with Warlingham) Cowpen, Grantham, Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton, Ogmore Valley, Redruth, St. Helens (Isle of Wight), South Blyth, and Weybridge," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 172.]... 1387

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3).—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Aberavon, Burslem, the Chesterfield Gas and Water Board District, Colne, Fenton, and Kendal, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Aberavon, Burslem, the Chesterfield Gas and Water Board District, Colne, Fenton, and Kendal," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 173.]... 1388

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4)—Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barnsley (Rural), Featherstone, Hambledon (Rural), Lutterworth (Rural), Ossett (Rural), St. Helens, Wigan, and the Wirral Joint Hospital District, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Barnsley (Rural), Featherstone, Hambledon (Rural), Lutterworth (Rural), St. Helens, Wigan, and the Wirral Joint Hospital District," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 174.] 1388

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).—Mr. Oldroyd reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That the parties opposing the Gas Light and Coke, Commercial Gas, and South Metropolitan Gas Companies Bill had stated that the evidence of Professor Vivian Lewes was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Professor Vivian Lewes, of 18, Lower Whitecross Street, London, do attend the said Committee To-day, at Three of the clock. Ordered, That Professor Vivian Lewes do attend the Committee on Group B of Private Bills this day, at Three of the clock. 1388

London County Council (General Powers) Bill; City of London (Various Powers) Bill; Great Western Railway Bill; Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. 1389

London County Council (Spitalfields Market) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table. 1389

PRIVATE BILL (GROUP A).—Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 2nd May, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table. 1389

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Colonial Bank Bill, without Amendment. That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Eastern District Committee of the County Council of the county of Stirling to construct waterworks and to supply water within their district; to authorise the County Council of the county of Stirling to acquire lands and servitudes for the purposes of such water supply; to authorise and require the said County Council to levy assessments and to borrow money; and for other purposes." East Stirlingshire Water Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Newport for the construction of a bridge over the River Usk, and of tramways and other works; and for other purposes." Newport Corporation Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Paignton Urban District Council to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes." Paignton Urban District Water Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill intituled, "An

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Act to confer further powers on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company; and for other purposes." London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of the Urban District of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn to supply gas, and to purchase the undertaking of the Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Gas and Coke Company, Limited; and for other purposes." Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [Lords]. Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Company to stop up certain level crossings and substitute bridges; to divert and alter certain roads; to construct an aerial ropeway; to acquire additional lands; to consolidate their debenture stocks and amend their Act of 1888 as to the consolidation of preference stocks; to subscribe to the Bantry Bay Steamship Company, Limited; to confer further powers upon the Company; and for other purposes." Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords]. And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to construct a pier at Valencia; to abstract water from the River Suir and lay pipes to their Thurles station; to acquire additional lands; to vest in the Company the undertaking of the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Light Railway Company; to subscribe further sums to the Southern Hotels, Limited; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." Great Southern and Western Railway Bill [Lords] 1389

East Stirlingshire Water Bill [Lords]; Newport Corporation Bill [Lords]; Paignton Urban District Water Bill [Lords]; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1390

Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [Lords]; Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords]; Great Southern and Western Railway Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1391

PETITIONS.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 1391

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Auchterarder, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1391

Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1391

Lunacy Bill—Petition of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1391

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from West Kirby, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1391

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Coventry; London; Prestatyn; Wakefield; Hartlepool (two); West Hartlepool; and Blairgowrie; to lie upon the Table 1391

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Tynemouth; Uxbridge; Swansea; Swalwell; Sheffield (five); Willington-on-Tyne; Chester-le-Street; Sleaford; South Benwell; Cornwall; Meigle; and Wallasey; to lie upon the Table... 1391

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Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour from Chester-le-Street; Messingham; East Butterwick; Sleaford; Wakefield; Cornwall; Swansea; and Bradford; to lie upon the Table 1391

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RIFLE RANGES—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 12th March—*Mr Radcliffe Cooke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 129.] 1392

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES—Account presented, of all Moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all Contracts for the grant of Deferred Life Annuities and for Payments on Death made, during the year 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 130.] 1392

SOUTH AFRICA—Copy presented, of Proclamation issued by the High Commissioner for South Africa on 19th March, 1900, relating to Alienations of Property by the South African Republic or Orange Free State made subsequently to the date of the Proclamation [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1392

BOARD OF EDUCATION—Copy presented, of Minute of the Board of Education, dated 6th April, 1900, establishing Higher Elementary Schools [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1392

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889—Copies presented, of Minutes sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of The Technical Instruction Act, 1889, for the following county and district:—County of Buckingham (Eighth Minute), dated 23rd February, 1900; District of Beckenham, dated 13th March, 1900 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1392

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1392

PRISONERS OF WAR—STATISTICS—SUGGESTED EXCHANGE—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1393

BOER PRISONERS AT SIMONS TOWN—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1394

DURBAN NAVAL VOLUNTEERS—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square) 1394

LORD ROBERTS'S PROCLAMATION AGAINST LOOTING—Question, Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1395

WAR MEDALS—Question, Captain Jessel (St. Pancras, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1396

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT—Question, Captain Jessel; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1396

MILITARY TRANSPORT—HAULAGE MACHINERY—Question, Mr. Warr (Liverpool, East Toxeth); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.) 1397

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INDIAN ARMY CAMP FOLLOWERS—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 1398

ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY AT THE FRONT—Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, Mr. Goschen... 1398

MILITARY TRAINING—THE AUTUMN MANŒUVRES—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1399

VOLUNTEER "WAITING COMPANIES"—Question, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke (Hereford); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1399

VOLUNTEER TRAINING GRANTS—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1399

VOLUNTEER POST OFFICE SERVANTS—Question, Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) 1400

CIVIL SERVANTS AND VOLUNTEER TRAINING—Question, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1401

RIFLE RANGES IN HEREFORDSHIRE—Question, Sir James Rankin (Herefordshire, Leominster); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1401

THE LATE FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DONALD STEWART—Question, Mr. Faber (York); Answer, Mr. Goschen 1401

SUBMARINE TORPEDO BOATS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. Goschen 1402

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, GREENWICH—NAVAL HISTORY LECTURES—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Goschen ... 1402

ENGINEER OFFICERS TO THE ACCOUNTANT BRANCH ROYAL NAVY—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, Mr. Goschen... 1403

BRITISH GUIANA—BANK NOTE ISSUES—Question, Mr. Brodie Hoare (Hampstead); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1403

CABLE COMMUNICATION WITH THE CAPE—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M Hicks Beach, Bristol, W.) 1404

BUDGET FIGURES—THE YEAR'S FIGURES—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Sir M. Hicks Beach 1404

MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICERS' CERTIFICATES—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) ... 1406

ROYAL COMMISSION ON SALMON FISHERIES—Question, Sir James Rankin; Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1406

DOG LICENCES—CASE OF ARIES—Question, Mr. Orr Ewing (Ayr Burghs); Answer, The Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. Jesse Collings, Birmingham, Bordesley) 1406

INSPECTORS OF TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS AT LIVERPOOL—Question, Mr. Steadman; Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1407

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MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND FREE POSTAGE—Question, Colonel Welby (Taunton); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1407

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF POSTAL ORGANISATIONS—Question, Mr. Woods (Essex, Walthamstow); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1408

BOARD OF EDUCATION—DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE—Questions, Mr. Bryce and Lord Balcarres; Answers, The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir James Gorst, Cambridge University) 1409

MONAGHAN POST OFFICE—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1409

BELFAST TELEGRAPH OFFICE—MANTURIN'S CASE—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Hanbury 1410

COMPENSATION TO INJURED IRISH POLICEMEN—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1410

EVICTED FARM AT ERRIGAL TRUAGH—Questions, Mr. Macaleese, and Captain Donelan; Answers, Mr. Atkinson 1410

BELFAST POOR LAW MEDICAL OFFICER—Question, Mr. Macaleese; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1411

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Gibson Bowles, and Captain Sinclair (Forfarshire); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1412

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) [EXPENSES]—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the remuneration of any person employed by the Board of Trade, under any Act of the present Session for the better Prevention of Accidents on Railways, and of the Expenses incurred by the Board under such Act (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*Sir William Walrond.*) 1413

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY)—Ordered, That the other Government business have precedence this day of the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) 1413

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER)—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House at its rising on Monday do adjourn till Thursday, 26th April, and that at the conclusion of the proceedings on the Agricultural Holdings Bill Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TERMS OF SETTLEMENT—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS—MARTIAL LAW—CHARGES AGAINST BRITISH TROOPS.

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DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Courtney (Cornwall, Bodmin) 1414
Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny) 1418
Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.) 1419
Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 1421
The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1424
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ... 1428
Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cumberland, Cockermouth) ... 1430
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1431
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) ... 1432
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 1435
The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) .. 1435
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) 1438
Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) 1441
Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.) ... 1444
Mr. H. J. Wilson (Yorkshire, W.R. Holmfirth) 1445
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) ... 1445

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

BANK HOLIDAY ACTS AMENDMENT—Bill to amend the Bank Holiday Acts, 1871 and 1874, and to make provision for an additional Bank Holiday, to be called Empire Day, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Faithfull Begg, Sir Howard Vincent, Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. Scott Montagu, Mr. William Johnston, Mr. Bainbridge, and Mr. Pryce.

Bank Holiday Acts Amendment Bill—"To amend the Bank Holiday Acts, 1871 and 1874, and to make provision for an additional Bank Holiday, to be called Empire Day," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 23rd May, and to be printed. [Bill 175] 1447

Finance Bill—[Third Reading]—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, That the Bill be now read the third time."—*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

DISCUSSION :

Sir William Harcourt (Monmouthshire, W.) 1454
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1460
Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 1463
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ... 1467
Mr. Herbert Lewis (Flint Boroughs) 1470

Question put.

The House divided—Ayes, 103; Noes, 16. (Division List No. 99.)

Bill read the third time and passed.

Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill—Read the third time and passed.

Naval Reserve (Mobilisation) Bill—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1473

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Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. Steadman, Tower Hamlets, Stepney). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Colville (Lanark, N.E.) 1478
The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) 1478
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1478
The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square) 1481
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1482
Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) 1484
Sir J. Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 1485
Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1486
Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Brightside) 1486
Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth (Lancashire, Clitheroe)... 1487
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 1487

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 30th April.

Land Charges Bill [Lords]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell, Lanarkshire, Mid) 1488
Mr. Bond (Nottingham, E.) 1494
Mr. Herbert Lewis (Flint Boroughs) 1495
The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight) 1495
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1497

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Land Registry New Buildings Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Akers Douglas.*)

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1498

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers Douglas.*)

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr Edmund Robertson.*)

DISCUSSION:—

**The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray (Buteshire)* 1499
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 1500

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present—

The House was adjourned at a quarter after Eleven of the clock.

LORDS: MONDAY, 9TH APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Brighton Corporation, North Warwickshire Water; the same were ordered to lie on the Table ... 1501

Scottish American Investment Company, Limited Bill [H.L.]—Committed 1501

Ossett Corporation Gas Bill—Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1501

Wetherby District Water Bill; Wakefield Corporation Market Bill—Read 2ª, and committed 1501

Dorking Water Bill [H.L.]; Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1501

Great Central Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [H.L.]; Neath Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Cork Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Essex Water Board Bill [H.L.]; South Essex Water Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Northbourne be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Barnard; read, and agreed to 1501

Morley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Rotherham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Sheffield Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Rawmarsh Urban District Council (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Walsall Corporation Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Barnard be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Northbourne; read, and agreed to. 1502

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Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Bill; Hoylake and West Kirby Improvement Bill; Widnes and Runcorn Bridge Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1502

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; a Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Hoylake and West Kirby Gas and Water, Manningtree and Mistley (Essex) Gas, South Elmsall, South Kirby, and North Elmsall Gas, and Steyning and District Water—was presented by the Earl Waldegrave (for the Lord Balfour); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 52.) 1502

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

NAVY (ESTIMATES, 1899-1900).—Statement showing the original and revised programme of estimated expenditure in cash, and in net value of stores to be issued for shipbuilding, etc., during the year 1899-1900. 1502

MINES AND QUARRIES—Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors for the year 1899 1502

INDIAN EXPENDITURE (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India (Vol. IV.), and Minutes of Evidence (Vol. III.) 1503

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND)—Return for the year ended 31st December, 1899 1503

EGYPT, No. 1 (1900)—Reports by Her Majesty's Agents and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1899 1503

AFRICA, No. 3 (1900)—Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba [in continuation of Africa, No. 8. (1899)]. 1503

CHINA, No. 2 (1900)—Correspondence with the United States Government respecting foreign trade in China 1503

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—No. 2396. Turkey (Trebizond and Sivas, 1899) 1503

INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES)—Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian and Wesleyan services of garrison churches in India which have been consecrated for the service of the Church of England. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table... 1503

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899—Regulation for the appointment of Members of the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction 1503

SUPERANNUATION—Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the posts of Senior Examiner and of Junior Examiner in the Board of Education (Science and Art Department), professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are requisite. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table... 1503

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Finance Bill—Read 2ª (according to order); Committee negatived; then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order), and dispensed with. Bill read 3ª, and passed 1504

Army (Annual) Bill—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 1504

Public Libraries Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª (according to order); Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 1504

Census (Ireland) Bill—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 1504

NEW BILL.

County Courts (Investment of Deposits) Bill [H.L.]—A Bill to amend the law with regard to the investment of money paid into a county court—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 53.) 1504

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

ROYAL ASSENT.

COMMISSION—The following Bills received the Royal Assent—1. Finance. 2. Army (Annual). 3. Census (Ireland). 4. Military Lands Provisional Order. 5. Colonial Bank 1504

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Three of the clock, till Monday the 30th instant.

COMMONS: MONDAY, 9th APRIL, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [Lords]; Cleethorpes Gas Bill [Lords]; Cowes Pier Bill [Lords]; Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [Lords]; Falkirk and District Water Bill [Lords]; Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [Lords]; Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [Lords]; Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [Lords]; Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [Lords]; Motherwell Water Bill [Lords]; New Russia Company Bill [Lords]; Southampton Harbour Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1505

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April 1505

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PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April 1505

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm the issue by the Rhymney Iron Company, Limited, of certain shares credited as partly paid up." Rhymney Iron Company Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the Manchester Ship Canal Company to acquire the Manchester Racecourse and other lands, and to construct a new dock, railway, and works; to establish a thrift fund for their officers and servants; and for other purposes." Manchester Ship Canal Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Mountain Ash to construct additional waterworks and gasworks; and for other purposes." Mountain Ash Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Corporation of Burnley and neighbouring authorities with respect to tramways and street improvements within and beyond the borough; and for other purposes." Burnley Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to extend the boundaries of the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh and County of the City of Edinburgh; to authorise the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of the City to purchase and acquire lands at Saughton; to erect and maintain a Tramway Power Station at Portobello; to construct works and Tramways; to acquire lands; to amend Acts; and for other purposes." Edinburgh Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to make new provisions with respect to the Governing Body of the Schools of King Edward the Sixth in Birmingham, and with respect to the management of the Schools property and revenues under their control; and to confer further powers on the said Governing Body; and for other purposes." Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to transfer all the property and liabilities of Mason University College, in the City of Birmingham, to the University of Birmingham, and to repeal the Mason University College Act, 1897; to confer certain powers on the said University; and for other purposes." Birmingham University Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Company to raise additional capital, convert their existing capital, acquire lands, amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes." Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act for empowering the Dorking Water Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." Dorking Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Exmouth Urban District Council to purchase the undertaking of the Exmouth and District Waterworks Company, and to supply water within their district; and for other purposes." Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [Lords].

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And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the Fishguard Water and Gas Company to extend their limits of supply, to construct additional waterworks and gasworks, to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes." Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [Lords] 1506

Rhymney Iron Company Bill [Lords]; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [Lords]; Mountain Ash Water Bill [Lords]; Burnley Corporation Bill [Lords]; Edinburgh Corporation Bill [Lords]; Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [Lords]; Birmingham University Bill [Lords]; Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [Lords]; Dorking Water Bill [Lords]; Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [Lords]; Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1507

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Glastonbury Corporation Gas Bill; Hastings Harbour Bill; Maidenhead Gas Bill; Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords]; Wellingborough and District Tramroads Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1508

Governments Stocks and Other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords]; Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [Lords]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1508

PRIVATE BILLS—Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 129, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*) 1508

Tottenham Urban District Council Bill—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1508

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to—Finance Bill; Army (Annual) Bill; Census (Ireland) Bill, without Amendment. That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to Public Libraries, Museums, and Gymnasiums, and to regulate the Liability of Managers of Libraries to Proceedings for Libel." Public Libraries Bill [Lords] 1508

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners. The House went; and, being returned, Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—1. Finance Act, 1900; 2. Army (Annual) Act, 1900; 3. Census (Ireland) Act, 1900; 4. Military Lands Provisional Order Confirmation Act, 1900; 5. Colonial Bank Act, 1900 1509

PETITIONS.

Agricultural Holdings Bill—Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1509

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Earlston; Weem; and Haddington; to lie upon the Table... 1509

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Local Authorities Officers' Superannuation Bill—Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1509

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (BOROUGH OF HACKNEY DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL)—Petition from Hackney, against alteration; to lie upon the Table 1509

Public Houses (Scotland) Later Opening Bill—Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table 1509

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour, from Portsmouth; and Peckham Rye; to lie upon the Table 1509

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill and Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petition from Gainsborough, in favour; to lie upon the Table... 1509

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill—Petitions in favour, from Garstang; West Hartlepool; Bolton; Ulster; Ripon; Preston; Southport; and Batley; to lie upon the Table 1509

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (No. 2) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (thirteen); Oldbury; Peckham; Swansea; Gloucester; Manchester; Bristol; and Penrith; to lie upon the Table ... 1510

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Churnside, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1510

Sunday Closing (Monmouthshire) Bill—Petitions in favour, from Ripon; Saxilby; Garstang; Earby; Manchester; Preston; Gloucester; and Swansea; to lie upon the Table 1510

Town Councils (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Kinross, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1510

Veterinary Surgeons Amendment Bill—Petition of Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1510

VIVISECTION—Petition from Hornsea, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table... 1510

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INDIAN EXPENDITURE (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Copy presented, of Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India (Vol. IV.), and Minutes of Evidence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1510

MINES AND QUARRIES—Copy presented, of Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1510

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND)—Copy presented, of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1510

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND)—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th March; *Mr. William Johnstone*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.] 1511

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AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899—Copy presented, of Regulations for the Appointment of Members of the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.] 1511

MERCHANT SEAMEN—Copy presented, of Report of a Committee appointed by the Board of Trade on the Question of Continuous Discharge Certificates for Seamen, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1511

EAST INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES IN INDIA)—Copy presented, of Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian and Wesleyan Services of Garrison Churches in India which have been consecrated for the service of the Church of England [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1511

SUPERANNUATIONS—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the posts of Senior Examiner and of Junior Examiner in the Board of Education (Science and Art Department), professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1511

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT—Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended 31st December, 1899, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.) in which Accounts were opened in the Books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.] 1511

CHINA (No. 2, 1900)—Copy presented, of Correspondence with the United States Government respecting Foreign Trade in China [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1512

AFRICA (No. 3, 1900)—Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (in continuation of Africa, No. 8, 1889) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1512

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2396 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1512

EGYPT (No. 1, 1900)—Copy presented, of Reports by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1512

NAVY (ESTIMATES, 1899-1900)—Copy presented, of Statement showing the original and revised Programme of Estimated Expenditure in cash, and in net value of Stores to be issued for Shipbuilding, etc., during the year 1899-1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1512

COAL TABLES—Copy ordered, "of Statement showing the Production and Consumption of Coal, and the Number of Persons employed in Coal Production, in the Principal Countries of the World, in each year from 1883 to 1898, as far as the particulars can be stated; together with a

Statement showing the Production of, and Trade in, Petroleum in the United States and in the Russian Empire for a series of yerrs (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 118, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)—Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.] 1512

AUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENT)—Return ordered, "of monthly comparative statements of the number of Paupers of all classes (except lunatics in asylums, registered hospitals, and licensed houses, and vagrants) in receipt of relief in England and Wales on the last day of every week in each month of the several years from 1857 to 1900, both inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1899.")—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.] 1512

AUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENT)—Return ordered, "of Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1900, and similar Statement for the 1st day of July, 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136.] 1513

OOR RELIEF (ENGLAND AND WALES)—Return ordered, "of Statement of the amount expended for In-maintenance and Out-door Relief in England and Wales during the half-year ended Lady Day, 1900.

"And similar Statement for the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1900." —(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137.] 1513

[OUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES—Returns ordered, "showing, (1) in respect of the local authorities in England and Wales who have carried out or are carrying out improvement or reconstruction schemes under Parts I. and II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, the size of the area included in each scheme; the number of persons of the working classes who were resident on such area at the date of making the scheme, and the number provided for or to be provided for under the scheme; the nature of the accommodation provided; the amount authorised to be borrowed, and the amount actually borrowed for the purpose of the scheme; the rate of interest thereon; the periods allowed for repayment; the amount of loans outstanding on the 31st March, 1900; the estimated or actual expenditure under the scheme in respect of (a) land, (b) buildings; the income from rents or other sources during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1900, and the expenditure (other than that defrayed out of borrowed money) during the year in respect of the scheme, the amount expended in repayment of the loans and interest thereon being distinguished; and (2) the names of the local authorities in England and Wales who have adopted Part III. of the Act and as regards each of those authorities who have provided or are providing lodging houses for the working classes under that part of the Act, the number of lodging houses acquired, erected, or being erected, the number of persons provided for or to be provided for, the amount authorised to be borrowed for the purpose of the purchase of land or the acquisition

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or erection of lodging houses and the amount actually borrowed, the rate of interest thereon, the periods allowed for repayment, the amount of loans outstanding on the 31st day of March, 1900; the estimated or actual cost of (a) land, (b) buildings; the income from rents or other sources during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1900; and the expenditure (other than that out of borrowed money) during the year, the amount expended in repayment of loans and interest thereon being distinguished."—(*Mr. Hazell.*) 1513

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES (WAGES) (IRELAND)—Return ordered, "showing, in respect of each County Council, County Borough Council, Rural and Urban District Council, body of Town Commissioners not an Urban District Council, and Poor Law Union in Ireland, whether the Contracts entered into by the Authority for the execution of works specify any conditions as to the Wages to be paid by the Contractor, or other conditions with regard to persons employed by him; and, if so, what are the conditions so specified."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 1514

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) [ADVANCES]—Committee to consider of authorising the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums as may be required for the purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other Public Offices in London, and of authorising the Treasury to borrow money by means of Terminable Annuities, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Thursday, 26th April.—(*Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley.*) 1514

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES (WAGES)—Return ordered, "showing, in respect of each administrative county and each Poor Law Union in England and Wales, whether the Contracts entered into by the Authority for the execution of works specify any conditions as to the Wages to be paid by the Contractor, or other conditions with regard to persons employed by him; and, if so, what are the conditions so specified."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 1515

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork, N.E.); Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1515

KOORN SPRUIT DISASTER—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1516

CAPE RAILWAY MANAGEMENT—Question, Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1516

MILITIA—OFFICERS' GRATUITIES—Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1516

MILITIA REGULATIONS—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1516

INNS OF COURT RIFLE VOLUNTEERS—Question, Mr. Lees Knowles (Salford, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1516

STRENGTH OF VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS—Question, Mr. Gretton (Derbyshire, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1517

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VOLUNTEER BUILDINGS—LOANS—Questions, Mr. C. J. Murray (Coventry); Answer, Mr. Anstruther (St. Andrews Burghs) 1518

INDIA—USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES FOR MILITARY SERVICES—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Lord G. Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) ... 1518

WEST INDIES—FEE FOR REGISTRATION OF INDUSTRIAL BANKS AND ASSOCIATIONS —Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1518

SIERRA LEONE—CRIMINAL JURISDICTION AND APPEALS—Question, Mr. Hedderwick (Wicks Burghs); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1519

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION—WESTERN AUSTRALIA—PROPOSED DIVISION OF THE COLONY—Question, Mr. Hogan (Tipperary, Mid); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1520

AUSTRALIAN MAILS—CALLING PORTS—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1520

PACIFIC CABLE COMMITTEE — Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1520

UGANDA RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Labouchere (Northampton); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1521

THEATRICAL CENSORSHIP—Questions, Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire) and Mr. T. B. Curran (Sligo, S.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) 1522

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—DECORATION OF CENTRAL LOBBY—Questions, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) and Dr. Farquharson; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1522

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL—CASE OF MR. BALEAN—Question, Mr. Flower (Bradford, W.); Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster, Isle of Wight)... 1523

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE—ARGENTINE IMPORTS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) 1523

SCOTTISH POLICE—ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE—CASE OF LAWRENCE HENDERSON —Question, Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1524

POST OFFICE RETIREMENT RULES—Question, Mr. Steadman (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1525

POST OFFICE—HEALTH STATISTICS—PHTHISIS—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1525

AMERICA MAIL SERVICE—WHITE STAR LINE—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1526

POST OFFICE—RISK ALLOWANCES—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1527

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POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPHISTS' INCREMENTS—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1527

POST OFFICE—WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE MEN'S GRIEVANCES—Question, Mr. Steadman; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1527

LIVERPOOL POSTAL STAFF—Question, Mr. Steadman; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1528

CLONES POST OFFICE—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1528

IRISH MONITORS AND CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Anstruther 1529

MINISTRY OF TRADE FOR IRELAND—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) ... 1529

KILKENNY UNION—LABOURERS' COTTAGES—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1530

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL SECRETARYSHIP—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1531

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS' SALARIES—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Atkinson 1531

THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND THE LATE SIR D. SEWART—Questions, Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) and Mr. Courtney (Cornwall, Bodmin); Answers, Mr A. J. Balfour 1531

METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS—Question, Mr. Causton (Southwark, W.); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 1532

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. Asquith (Fife, E.), Mr. Steadman, Mr. Flower, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), and Mr. Channing; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1533

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).—Ordered, That the proceedings on the Agricultural Holdings Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, Sittings of the House.—(*Mr. Balfour.*) 1534

NEW BILL.

POOR REMOVAL.—Bill to amend the Law relating to the removal of Paupers from England to Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Chaplin, and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.

Poor Removal Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the removal of Paupers from England to Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 176.] 1534

Agricultural Holdings Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The President of the Board of Agriculture.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton) 1534
Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire, N.) 1539
Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.) 1545
Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.)... 1553
Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 1555
Mr. Grant Lawson (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) ... 1559
Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 1562
Mr. Loyd (Berkshire, Abingdon) 1569
Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) 1572
Mr. J. H. Johnstone (Sussex, Horsham) 1579
Mr. Jasper More (Shropshire, Ludlow) 1588
Mr. Price (Norfolk, E.)... ... 1589
Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) 1595
Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.) 1599
The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Long, Liverpool, West Derby) 1599

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'it is desirable that legislation relating to agricultural holdings in Scotland should proceed on the lines hitherto followed; and that it is highly unsatisfactory to legislate on that subject for England and for Scotland in one and the same measure' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed be left out stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1611
The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1613
Capt. Sinclair (Forfarshire) ... 1615

Question put—

The House divided :—Ayes, 115; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 100.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Mr. Long.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1618
Col. Milward (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) ... 1619
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.)... 1620
Mr. Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1620
Mr. Long 1621

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 110; Noes, 35. (Division List No. 101.)

In pursuance of the Order of the House of the 6th day of this instant April, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned accordingly at five minutes before Twelve of the clock till Thursday, 26th April

END OF CONTENTS OF VOL. LXXXI.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME LXXXI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill was originated in the Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Ancient Monuments Protection	———	Read 1ª 5 April (1236)
*Army Annual	*Marquess of Lansdowne*	Read 1ª 3 April (1047); Read 2ª 6 April (1384); Read 3ª, Royal Assent 9 April (1504)
British Museum [H.L.]	*Viscount Peel*	Read 1ª 5 April (1236)
*Census (Great Britain)	*Marquess of Salisbury*	Read 2ª 22 Mar. (7); Committee Report, 23 Mar. (156); Read 3ª 26 Mar. (303); Royal Assent 27 Mar. (417)
*Census (Ireland)	———	Read 1ª 30 Mar. (783); Read 2ª 6 April (1385); Read 3ª; Royal Assent 9 April (1504)
Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground)	———	Read 1ª 3 April (1047)
*Consolidated Fund (No. 2)	*Marquess of Salisbury*	Read 1ª 23 Mar. (150); Read 2ª and 3ª 26 March (303); Royal Assent 27 Mar. (417)
Copyright [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Second Reading (adjourned) 26 Mar. (303); Read 2ª 29 Mar. (606)
Copyright (Artistic) [H.L.]	*Lord Monkswell*	Read 2ª 29 Mar. (609)
*County Courts (Investment of Deposits) [H.L.]	*Earl of Halsbury*	Read 1ª 9 April (1504)
*Education (Scotland) [H.L.]	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Motion for Return of Funds available 29 Mar. (618)
*Electoral Disabilities (Military Service)	———	Read 1ª 3 April (1047)
*Finance	*Marquess of Salisbury*	Read 1ª 6 April (1386); Read 2ª and 3ª; Royal Assent, 9 April (1504)
Money Lending [H.L.]	*Lord James of Hereford*	Read 3ª 22 Mar. (5)
*Police Reservists (Allowances)	———	Read 1ª 6 April (1386)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Prevention of Corruption [H.L.]	*Lord Russell of Killowen*	Read 1ª 22 Mar. (5); Read 2ª 2 April (919)
Public Libraries [H.L.]	*Lord Windsor*	Committee, 23 Mar. (150); Report 2 April (925); Third Reading (adjourned) 6 April (1385); Read 3ª 9 April (1504)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children (Ireland) [H.L.]	*Lord Sudley*	Read 1ª 29 Mar. (627)
*War Loan	*Marquess of Salisbury*	Royal Assent 27 Mar. (417)
Youthful Offenders [H.L.]	*Lord James of Hereford*	Report 22 Mar. (7); Read 3ª 27 Mar. (418)

(B.) House of Commons.

No.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
121	*Agricultural Holdings	*Mr. Long*	Read 2° 9 April (1534)
141	Agricultural Holdings (No. 2)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 23 Mar. (201)
81	Ancient Monuments Protection	*Lord Balcarres*	Committee 22 Mar. (148); 27 Mar. (544); Report 2 April (1044); Consid'n, Read 3°, 4 April (1231)
135	*Army Annual	———	Committee 29 Mar. (776); 2 April (1033); Read 3° 2 April (1036); Royal Assent 9 April (1504)
175	Bank Holiday Acts Amendment	*Mr. Faithfull Begg*	Read 1° 6 April (1447)
28	Beer Retailers' and Spirit Grocers' Licences (Ireland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Wm. Moore*	Read 2° 5 April (1376)
143	*Burial Grounds	*Sir M. White Ridley*	Read 1° 26 Mar. (335)
93	*Census (Great Britain)	*Mr. Chaplin*	Royal Assent 27 Mar. (417)
120	*Census (Ireland)	*Mr. Atkinson*	Read 2° 22 Mar. (141); Committee, Report, Read 3° 29 Mar. (779); Royal Assent 9 April (1504)
105	*Charitable Loans (Ireland)	*Mr. Atkinson*	Read 2° 22 Mar. (141);
109	Coal Mines (Prohibition of Child Labour Underground)	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Second Reading (adjourned) 22 Mar. (147); Read 2° 29 Mar. (780); Committee, Report, Read 3° 2 April (1044)

o.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
20	Coal Mines Regulation Acts Amendment	*Mr. Barlow*	Second Reading (adjourned) 28 Mar. (595)
—	*Consolidated Fund (No. 2)	———	Read 3° 22 Mar. (141); Royal Assent 27 Mar. (417)
5	Corporal Punishment	*Mr. Wharton*	Second Reading (put off for six months) 28 Mar. (547)
9	County Courts	*Mr. Monk*	Second Reading (adjourned) 3 April (1174)
52	Court of Criminal Appeal	*Mr. Pickersgill*	Read 1° 30 Mar. (830)
33	*Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland)	*Mr. A. Graham Murray*	Read 2° 2 April (969)
55	Education (School Attendance) (Scotland)	*Captain Sinclair*	Read 1° 27 Mar. (457)
96, 30	*Electoral Disabilities (Military Service)	*Sir M. White Ridley*	Consid'n, Read 3° 2 April (1043)
42	*Elementary Education	*Sir John Gorst*	Read 1° 26 Mar. (334)
56	Executors (Scotland)	*Mr. Thomas Shaw*	Read 1° 2 April (1044)
40	Factory and Workshop Act (1878) Amendment (No. 2)	*Mr. Harwood*	Read 1° 23 Mar. (201)
15	*Finance	*Mr. J. W. Lowther*	Committee 26 Mar. (337); 27 Mar. (458); 29 Mar. (720); Consideration 2 April (959); Read 3° 6 April (1447); Royal Assent, 9 April (1504)
42	Highways and Bridges Act (1891) Amendment	*Mr. Jeffreys*	Committee 28 Mar. (599)
51	Industrial Schools	*Mr. Flower*	Read 1° 27 Mar. (456)
49	*Inebriates Amendment (Scotland) [H.L.]	———	Read 1° 27 Mar. (431)
18	*Land Charges [H.L.]	———	Read 2° 6 April (1488)
52	*Land Registry (New Buildings)	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Read 1° 27 Mar. (456); Read 2° 6 April (1497)
10	Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment	*Mr. E. Robertson*	Second Reading (House adjourned) 6 April (1498)
54	Local Government (Scotland) Act(1894)Amendment(No.2)	*Captain Sinclair*	Read 1° 27 Mar. (457)
58	Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment (No. 3)	*Mr. Alex. Cross*	Read 1° 3 April (1079)
40	*Lunacy Board (Scotland) (Salaries, etc.)	*Mr. A. Graham Murray*	Read 1° 22 Mar. (145); Read 2° 2 April (1009)
45	Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment	*Mr. Field*	Read 1° 26 Mar. (416)

No.	Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
3 / 167	Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners)	*Sir Donald Currie*	Reported from Standing Committee 3 April (1077)
8 / 150	Midwives	*Mr. Tatton Egerton*	Reported from Standing Committee 27 Mar. (456)
156	Money Lending [H.L.]	———	Read 1° 29 Mar. (719)
126	*Naval Reserve (Mobilisation)	*Mr. Macartney*	Second Reading (adjourned) 2 April (1043); Read 2° 6 April (1473)
157	*Palatine Court of Durham [H.L.]	———	Read 1° 29 Mar. (719); Second Reading (adjourned) 2 April (1038)
153	Petty Customs Abolition (Scotland)	*Captain Sinclair*	Read 1° 27 Mar. (457)
91	*Police Reservists (Allowances)	*Sir M. White-Ridley*	Committee, Report, 2 April (1041); Considera'n 5 April (1376); Read 3° 6 April (1473)
176	*Poor Removal	*Mr. T. W. Russell*	Read 1° 9 April (1534)
78	*Railways (Prevention of Accidents)	*Mr. Ritchie*	Second Reading (adjourned) 22 Mar. (145); Read 2° 5 April (1278)
139	*Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Scotland)	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1° 22 Mar. (59)
144	*Sea Fisheries	*Mr. Ritchie*	Read 1° 26 Mar. (336)
161	Shop Hours Acts (1892) Amendment	*Mr. Steadman*	Read 1° 30 Mar. (830)
169	Smaller Dwellings (Scotland)	*Mr. Alexander Cross*	Read 1° 3 April (1079)
170	Temperance Reform, Threefold Option (Scotland)	*Mr. Parker Smith*	Read 1° 3 April (1079)
29	Tenants in Towns Improvement (Ireland)	*Mr. Macdeese*	Second Reading (put off for six months) 4 April (1178)
36	Town Councils (Scotland)	*Mr. Asher*	Read 2° 2 April (1044)
163	Vaccination	*Mr. Pickersgill*	Read 1° 30 Mar. (831)
114	*War Loan	*Mr. J. W. Lowther*	Royal Assent, 27 Mar. (417)
4	Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Amendment	*Col. Chalmer*	Bill withdrawn 4 April (1178)
14 / 165	Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension	*Mr. Harry Foster*	Reported from Standing Committee, 2 April (958)

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET THE 30TH JANUARY 1900, IN THE 63RD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1900.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 22nd March, 1900.

VISCOUNT GORT.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor, that the right of John Gage Prendergast, Viscount Gort, to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:

RUGELEY GAS.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON COUNTY TRAMWAYS (No. 1) BILL.

The order referring the Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders to the Standing Orders Committee, discharged.

WHITECHAPEL AND BOW RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

MERSEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

GREAT GRIMSBY STREET TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [H.L.].

Committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

CHURCH'S PATENT BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILL [H.L.].

LINCOLN CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

Reported with amendments.

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES GAS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 27th of February and on Monday last discharged; and Bill committed.

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 23rd of February and on Monday last discharged; and Bill committed.

OTLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL WATER BILL [H.L.].

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

LANCASHIRE INEBRIATES ACTS BOARD BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN AND WATERFORD AND CENTRAL IRELAND RAILWAY COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL [H.L.].

Standing Order No. 92, considered (according to order) and dispensed with, with respect to a petition of the Viscount de Vesci. Leave given to present the said petition.

COLONIAL BANK BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL AND CLONTARF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Commons Message considered (according to order).

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): The object of the Resolution which stands in my name is that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill, which closely depends on the larger measure, shall be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons. This course is not an unprecedented one, though I admit it is quite unusual. The great importance of the interests concerned in the question of the proposed extension of Dublin renders it desirable that the Bill should be referred to as strong a Committee as possible, and I think your Lordships will find that in a Joint Committee of the two Houses you have an apt tribunal to deal with so important a measure. The Bill had a somewhat checkered career last year, and it is desirable, in the interests of all parties, that there should be no inconvenient differences of opinion between the two Houses on the question. This will be achieved by the course I propose, which will also save a great deal of expense. I understand from my right hon. Friend in the House of Commons that he agrees with me that a small Committee will deal with this matter better than a large one, and I would propose that three, or, at the outside, four Members of this House should join with a like number of Members of the House of Commons. I have made these few remarks because the course suggested is an unusual one, but I think that, in the circumstances of the case, I can without hesitation recommend it for your Lordships' adoption.

Moved, That this House do concur in the following resolution communicated by the Commons, viz., "That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons" (The Chairman of Committees); agreed to; and a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RETURN SHOWING:—

1. Expenditure from the grant for public education in England and Wales in the year 1899, and expenditure from 1839 to 1899;

2. Number of public elementary day schools on the Annual Grant List on the August 31st, 1899; accommodation, number of scholars, and average attendance in those schools;

3. Detailed statistics of inspected schools, 1898-99: Public elementary day schools, evening continuation schools, and certified efficient schools; accommodation, number of scholars, average attendance, teachers employed, particulars of grant earned, income, expenditure, etc.;

4. Summary tables of educational statistics; and

5. Number of school boards under various heads of population:

TREATY SERIES, 1900.

No. 7. Convention and Declaration between the United Kingdom of Germany for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions; signed at London, November 14th, 1899 (ratifications exchanged at London and Berlin, February 16th, 1900);

No. 8. Convention between the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States of America for the adjustment of questions relating to Samoa; signed at Washington, 2nd December, 1899 (ratifications exchanged at London, Berlin, and Washington, 16th February, 1900);

No. 9. Treaty between the United Kingdom and the Republic of San Marino for the mutual extradition of fugitive criminals; signed at Florence, 16th October, 1900 (ratifications exchanged at Rome, December 5th, 1899).

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2390. Italy (1898 and 1899).

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Order, dated the 14th of March, 1900, relating to the conveyance of animals by the Steamship "Aldworth." Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to check corruption—Was presented by the Lord Russell of Killowen; read 1[a]; and to be printed. (No. 35.)

MONEY LENDING BILL [H.L.].

[THIRD READING.]

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read for the Third Time."—(*The Lord James of Hereford.*)

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, before this Bill leaves your Lordships' House, I wish to say one word with regard to it. I was not here when my noble friend introduced it, so that I do not know whether he did or did not act upon a suggestion which I made to him last session.* This is what I call thoroughly retrograde legislation. It fixes the price of money. I suggested last year that whenever any member of this Government brought in a retrograde measure, he should appear in the costume of the period to which legislatively he asked us to revert. My noble and learned friend is now asking Parliament to retrograde to the Dark Ages—to, I think, the customs of the 14th or the 13th centuries, when all these usury questions were in the hands of the clergy; and, as I ventured last year to say, my noble friend would, if he had followed my suggestion, have appeared in the dress of the Bishop of Hereford of that period. I do not know whether he followed that very excellent and valuable suggestion. If he had done so it would, I think, have been a warning as to what this kind of legislation really means. If you fix the price of one article—and money is the article probably most current in the world—why should you stop at that? Why should you not fix the price of other things? We all know what exceptional legislation means. The landlords have had a pretty good turn of it with regard to exceptional legislation in the matter of land. I remember hearing Mr. Gladstone, when he brought in his Bill in 1870 which interfered with contracts in Ireland, say, in eloquent language, that it was purely exceptional legislation, and that his hearers should not for a moment imagine that it was going to extend to other parts of the United Kingdom. But it had not been passed more than a year or two before it moved across the Irish Sea and settled in Scotland, and our socialistic Government has, I believe, got another Bill for further amending the law with reference to agricultural holdings. The point of my argument is this. When once you begin this sort of thing you never know where it will end. I recollect at that time holding strongly the other view, that it is not the duty of the State to make men's contracts or to interfere with them, and I also remember pointing out to those who thought they were not interested because

* May 1st, 1899. See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxx., page 928.

they were not landlords, that they could depend upon it, if this principle was once broken through, that the so-called exceptional legislation would extend to almost everything. I have in my hand a copy of a Bill entitled the Wages Boards Bill, the object of which is to provide for the establishment of wages boards with power to fix the minimum rate of wages to be paid to workers in particular trades, the socialistic Home Secretary of the day having the power to say what those trades are to be. Such a Bill as this is the direct consequence of the legislation proposed by my noble and learned friend. The great peculiarity of this Bill is the third clause, which says—

"A wages board shall consist of a Chairman and such number of other members, not more than four nor less than ten."

Who drafted that Bill I do not know, but these are the persons who have such great powers of calculation and who will fix the wages in every trade which the Home Secretary desires. The names at the back of the Bill are Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Burns, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Trevelyan. Mr. Burns admitted to me, at a discussion at the Society of Arts last year, that the object he and those who worked with him had in view was that all the instruments of production should be in the hands of the State, and that private enterprise should be done away with. I wish to call attention to the rapid way in which this is being brought about. The Bill which my noble and learned friend is now asking the House to read a third time met with a timely end in the House of Commons last year, and I hope it will meet with a like fate during the present session.

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 3ª (according to order); an Amendment made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.].

Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

The Earl of Wemyss.

MUNICIPAL TRADING — PROPOSED JOINT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is proposed to appoint a Joint Committee of the two Houses to consider questions relating to municipal trading. I must at once admit to the House that I have asked this question not so much with a view of obtaining information as with a view of urging on Her Majesty's Government the importance of appointing as soon as possible a Committee to inquire into what is generally called municipal trading. There are a large number of Bills which, to some extent, deal with this question, and I refer especially to Bills by which municipalities take powers very largely to extend their tramways or electrical undertakings beyond the borough limits. It is very difficult for Committees to whom these Bills are referred, if they are opposed, or for myself, in the case of unopposed Bills, to know quite how to deal with them without having some guidance from Parliament. It is also not quite fair to those who are introducing Bills that they should not know definitely what they will be allowed to do and what they will not be allowed to do. Therefore, I would very strongly urge upon the Government the necessity in the public interest that the Committee which was promised last year should be appointed as soon as possible, so that we may have some means of judging before the end of the session how these questions of large and widespread importance should be dealt with.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Before my noble friend answers the noble Earl, I should like to say that I am very glad this question has been put. Last night I had the honour of being asked to dine with the London Chamber of Commerce, where municipal trading was the question for discussion after dinner. The almost unanimous feeling was expressed that it was necessary that some such Committee as this should be appointed, in order to draw the line beyond which municipal trading should not extend, for municipalities now enter into almost every kind of trade. My own view is that it is by private enterprise that our commercial country has attained its present position, and that national progress depends upon private enterprise, and not upon the

municipalisation of inventions when they come out.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I presume from the fact that my noble friend at the table has addressed this question to Her Majesty's Government that he holds Her Majesty's Government responsible for arranging these private Bills in this proposed manner. Now, I have always been taught that the Government takes no side in private Bills, and that private Bills are left to the management of the very able Members in both Houses of Parliament who devote themselves to that task. I am not, therefore, able as a member of the Government to give any answer to my noble friend. If he asks me individually I say it is very desirable that such a Committee should be appointed. I observe in the ordinary channels of information that a similar sentiment was expressed by the Leader of the other House of Parliament, but we do not accept it as a Government measure. The House of Lords is perfectly willing to do its part in the appointment of this Joint Committee, and as soon as the House of Commons has come to a similar resolution I hope the Joint Committee will set on foot what I have no doubt will be its very salutary deliberations.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 22nd March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Petersham) Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

HAMILTON BURGH BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LONDON WATER (PURCHASE) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton), having been called upon, began to address the House——

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Perhaps I may be allowed to intervene in order to make an appeal to the promoters and opponents of these Water measures to postpone the consideration to another day, as the Irish Members have obtained this day, by arrangement with the Government, for the discussion of the financial relations between Ireland and England.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I would point out to the hon. Gentleman that he cannot take advantage of this permitted interruption to raise a debate on a motion for adjournment.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I had no intention of promoting a debate; I simply desire to point out that this day has been obtained by the Irish Members for the discussion of a grave Irish matter, after many difficulties and prolonged negotiations with the Government. I am sure that when the First Lord of the Treasury gave the Irish Members this day the right hon. Gentleman was not aware that a large portion of the sitting, perhaps three or four hours, would be devoted to a discussion on contentious private Bills. It would be a matter of grave injury to the Irish Members to take from them any of the precious time which they have obtained at so much trouble for the discussion of this question. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen interested in these Bills to postpone them for a few days, and to remove them from a position into which by some mischance they have got.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I would point out that the Bills have been set down for Second Reading "by order." Surely that ought to settle the matter.

*MR. SPEAKER: What does the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill propose to do?

MR. STUART: I hope that under the peculiar circumstances if I reply to this appeal I shall not lose my right of speech on the Bill itself. The London Water Bills were put down before any arrangement had been arrived at with regard to the Irish question. Neither the promoters nor the opponents of the Bill are therefore responsible for the present position. It will be remembered that there was a good deal of disappointment owing to the repeated postponements of the Bills last year, and I undertook that there should be no further postponement of the matter this year. However, I am quite in the hands of the House, and am prepared to shorten the debate or postpone it. I will take the course the House deems most convenient.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): It is entirely by accident the Bills were put down for to-day. This is really the third postponement, and if we do not go on now it would be extremely hard upon those hon. Members who have come down to-day. We have already lost a quarter of an hour, but as far as we are concerned on this side we will promise not to unduly prolong the debate.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Some of our men have been brought from Kerry.

*MR. SPEAKER: I cannot allow any further debate on this matter. It is not strictly in order. The question put by the hon. Member for Waterford has been answered.

MR. STUART rose——

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Go on, then. A very inconvenient course has been taken, and one which will not conduce to the progress of debate. Our men have come from Kerry; those men have come from London. A penny 'bus fare against a £5 note.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is my duty to see that the ordinary course is followed, and that the Orders of the House are carried out. The Order is that this Bill shall be now read, and that must be done unless there is an agreement to put it off.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): We only get an Irish day once in a blue month.

MR. STUART again essayed to speak, but his voice was drowned with cries of "Divide."

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): On a point of order, can I move, without any remarks, that the Bill be read a second time?

*MR. SPEAKER: I have already put that question.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I would appeal to the President of the Local Government Board to guide the House in this difficulty.

MR. STUART again rose to speak, and was received with Nationalist cries of "Divide."

*MR. SPEAKER: I hope hon. Members will not drive me to a course which I should be extremely sorry to adopt. But I shall have to enforce the rules of the House, and such a course must deprive Members of the opportunity of discussion altogether.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Go on, then; go on.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, respectfully, in view of what has taken place, whether it is not in order to cry "Divide."

*MR. SPEAKER: It is not in itself disorderly to cry "Divide"; but the cry may be so raised as to become disorderly.

MR. STUART, speaking amid great interruption, said: I will occupy the shortest amount of time possible. I have no option now but to go on. I am not a free agent, but am in the hands of the House. It is not possible for me to withdraw the motion, for I gave a promise that I would not further postpone the Bills. I am in an unfortunate position, having to speak amid great interruptions. I do not know whether the Government will consent to postponing the Bills, seeing that they put the Irish debate down for this day. Perhaps the President of the Local Government Board can

give the House some advice in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I hope, if I respond to the appeal of the hon. Gentleman, I shall not be precluded from speaking later in the debate.

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman can do so by the indulgence of the House.

MR. CHAPLIN: Then I may say it appears to me that this is a question to be settled, not by the Government, but by the promoters and opponents of the Bill. So far as I am individually concerned I should have thought they would have had no objection to the adjournment, but I am bound to say that after the attitude of hon. Members below the gangway on the Opposition side the position is entirely altered. Hon. Members opposite have attempted by threats [Nationalist cries of "No"] to coerce the House of Commons and to prevent debate upon a subject which the House has ordered to be debated this afternoon. In these circumstances if the House was to yield to the coercion of hon. Members below the gangway, I cannot imagine a proceeding more ill-calculated for the future good order of the House.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The sense of fairness of the House will allow me to say a few words. We had considerable trouble in getting a day from the Government. It now appears that these Bills were set down before the appointment was made, and it is clear that the Government, either intentionally or unintentionally, has taken an unfair advantage of the Nationalist Members. I feel sure, especially after what was said last evening, that the Leader of the House is in no way responsible for it. I and my colleagues have no desire to use threats or coercion; but, naturally, having brought Members from the most distant parts of Ireland for the discussion of a very important subject, on a day given by the Leader of the House, we feel sore at finding that another debate is to take place which will destroy the value of the concession made to us by the Government. The House will see the reasonableness of our demand that this debate should be adjourned, so that the promise of the First Lord may be kept in the spirit as well as the letter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Send for Balfour.

MR. CHAPLIN: In the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury I can give the House the positive assurance that there was no idea on the part of my right hon. friend that the day given to the Irish Members should be curtailed. I have reason to believe that the debate on these Water Bills will not take long if it is allowed to proceed, and I am sure my right hon. friend will not allow the Irish Members to be in the least damnified by these proceedings.

MR. STUART: I hope to be able to shorten the discussion on these Bills, and will at once proceed with the task of moving the Second Reading of this Bill, which deals with the question of the purchase of the London Water Companies. The necessity for a long debate has been obviated to a large extent by the Report of the Royal Commission which was recently issued. The Commission was asked whether it recommended increased control, and the Report of that Commission is distinctly in favour of purchase, and in consequence it is not necessary on the present occasion for me to argue that question. For ten years in this House I have argued it, and the question of purchase is a foregone conclusion —— [Interruption.]

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: On a of order, having regard to the rep of this scene, will the Governmen for the First Lord of the Treasury?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR here entered House, and Mr. STUART resumed speech; but his remarks were not in gibly heard in the Gallery, owing to noise proceeding in all parts of House.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshi Mid): As I understand it, the questio has been put from the Chair that the Bill be now read a second time. That being so, is it not competent for a motion to be made that the debate be now adjourned?

*MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing to prevent any Member who is in possession

of the House from moving such a motion, but there is no right on the part of a Member to interrupt another Member in order to move the adjournment.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I am most anxious that this scene should not continue, but I think the question could be settled by the First Lord of the Treasury if he would intervene and suggest the postponement of these Bills for a couple of days. Such a postponement could do no harm to the promoters or the opponents, and it will have the effect of enabling the First Lord to keep his word to the Irish party in the spirit as well as the letter.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am not sure, but, as a direct application has been made to me by the hon. Member, with the permission of the House, I might say how the matter stands, so far as the Government is concerned. What the hon. Gentleman has stated to the House is absolutely correct to the letter. There is no doubt whatever that, when I arranged with hon. Gentlemen opposite and the House that to-day should be devoted to a discussion of the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland, I intended that, so far as in me lay, it should be a full Parliamentary day. But the hon. Member for Waterford has forgotten one circumstance, which I recall to his recollection, and that is that the private Bill business of the House is in no sense under the control of the Government. I am not sure that that is a good system, but it is one which has long obtained in the House. The Government is never consulted and is never even informed as to the particular day on which the promoters of private Bills had arranged to bring them on. The result has constantly been that great inconvenience had arisen, certainly to the Government, and I think even to the House, by some important debate of national interest being postponed for hour after hour in consequence of a wrangle over a private Bill or set of Bills. If it rested with the Government to arrange private Bills for the general convenience of the House these accidents would not occur. The hon. Member for Waterford will see, therefore, that the position in which he finds himself is only a repetition of the position in which Governments constantly find themselves when an important discussion is to come on.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: But we have only one day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When the Government say, with regard to their own business, that such and such a Bill will be taken as the first Order on such and such a day, it is always understood to mean that that is subject to the exigencies of private business, over which the Government have no control. That is the broad position as regards Parliamentary business, and I think hon. Gentlemen opposite will agree that I have neither overstated nor misstated the case. As to the particular case now before the House, my own view is that the promoters of these Bills would do well, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, to consent to a postponement, unless it can be shown that either the promoters or the opponents will suffer some substantial and incalculable loss by such a postponement. I have no power of controlling their action, but that is my view, having regard to the fact that a large section of the House understood that this day was being giving over to them as far as the Government could give it to them.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The promoters have already made that offer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member for Waterford will see that it is impossible to do anything more than make the appeal which I am now making to the promoters and opponents. Personally I hope that appeal will be met on both sides of the House, but, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, this is not a matter in which the Leader of the House has, or ought to have, any control.

MR. STUART: I believe, Mr. Speaker, I am still in possession of the House. I can only say, under the circumstances, I most heartily respond to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman. I may say that this Bill was adjourned on several occasions last session. I was much found fault with, and I then undertook to proceed with it when it next came on, but under the circumstances, if the House desires, I will move the adjournment

of these Bills. I am sure my own personal position in the matter will not be found fault with, for I have done my best to carry out what I believe to be right. I beg to move that this debate be adjourned until this day week.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Stuart*).

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): When this date was selected for the Second Reading of the London Water Bills I can assure the hon. Members from Ireland that we had no sort of conception that this day had been allocated to them. We took every care we could at the time to fix upon a day for the general convenience of the House, and we had not the least idea that this day was given up for Irish business or we would certainly have avoided this day. These Bills have been too often postponed, not only in this session, but in other sessions, and we understood definitely and positively that they would be taken when we came down to the House this afternoon. I doubt very much whether the Leader of the House quite understands what our position in this matter is. I should have been only too glad to conform to the agreement, and I would not have had a word to say if——

AN HON. MEMBER: It was discussed yesterday.

*MR. WHITMORE: As one of those responsible for fixing this day for the Second Reading of the Bill, I had not heard a single word of remonstrance from any Irish Member. These Bills are important to us, and we were prepared to discuss them to-day with the greatest possible brevity. What happened? We have now got to a quarter to four and not one single step forward has been made. Really, if the hon. Gentleman opposite had trusted us a little more, it is probable that by this time we would have gone a considerable way towards the Second Reading. Personally, I should like to say to the House that I believe, if they would give us their kindly indulgence, we might finish both these Bills in a very short time. What I wish the Leader of the House to understand is that we feel we have done nothing inconsiderate or irregular, and that we have every possible desire to give every kind indulgence to hon. Gentlemen from Ireland. But we come here to find ourselves interrupted at the very outset of the time set apart for private business. I do not want to inflame passion; but, undoubtedly, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford must know that the attitude of his supporters has been provocative in the extreme. We are now asked to acquiesce in the wish of the Leader of the House. But to a great extent that conclusion has been arrived at by clamour and tyranny. It will be a bad precedent, and for my part I wish that the Bill set down for to-day had been proceeded with.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I would appeal to hon. Members on that side of the House who represent Ireland to give us three-quarters of an hour. In that time all our Bills would be finished. Now the Leader of the House apparently is going to give way, because we have been coerced by a certain section of the House. If business is to be conducted in that way, it will be open for any section above or below the gangway to prevent any private business from going forward.

*SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): As one who has lodged an opposition to one of these Bills, I hope the House will agree with the feeling of the First Lord of the Treasury. I cannot forget that the Irish Members could have taken a great deal of the Budget night, and that they did not take that co It was really an honourable understan that they should have this day for t selves. I cannot help thinking neither party knew in the least that t Bills were down.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I really must protest against the course proposed. As a London Member I hav to say that we are as numerous as th Irish Members.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We have not stolen your Parliament. (Interruption.)

MR. BARTLEY: The only difference between us and them is that we are supporters of the Government. [Interruption.] We have come here on this important question of the water supply of

London, and for any section of this House —[Cries of "No section," and interruption]—to come down here—[Cheers, and interruption]—and simply to make a noise and prevent English legislation being carried out is, as my hon. and gallant friend says, a great scandal. I do think the House is coming to a very low ebb indeed. [Hear, hear, and interruption.] Of course, when a day was given to the Irish Members, and I must say it was a very great concession to give —[Cries of "Oh!" and renewed disorder.] There is no other section of the House that have got a day.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We had a Parliament instead of a day, and you robbed us of it. [Cheers, and interruption.]

MR. BARTLEY: I do say that it seems a regular outrageous scandal that we should be treated in this way by a certain section of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is no section.

MR. BARTLEY: I don't know what the hon. Member means by "no section."

MR. T. M. HEALY: We are the Irish nation. [Cheers, and disorder.]

MR. BARTLEY: It is certainly a section that has not set an example in the way of the orderly conduct of business. [Renewed interruption.] It is not a section whose loyalty should give it privilege, and I say emphatically we ought to protest against this, and I hope we will decide against it. The time has not yet come when the House of Commons is to be dictated to by a rabble. [Interruption, and cries of "Withdraw!"]

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will see that the expression is not one which he ought to have used.

MR. BARTLEY: If you, Sir, rule that this is not a rabble, I will withdraw the expression.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a proper form of withdrawal, and I must call on the hon. Member simply to withdraw the word.

MR. BARTLEY: Upon your ruling, Sir, I will withdraw the word.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not sure that I shall be able to contribute anything material to heal or cool down the passions which have unfortunately been stirred in this debate, but I will endeavour to do so, and I cannot help thinking that hon. Members will for a moment give me their attention. There are two quite distinct and separate cases before the House. One of these cases appeals to hon. Gentlemen opposite and I think a good many on this side. The other case appeals to my hon. friends the Members for West Islington and Chelsea, and others who take that side. I think there is justification in both. Let me state what I understand to be the case of my hon. friends first. They say in the first place that they took all the ordinary steps, and more than all the ordinary steps, to let it be known that these important private Bills would come up today, and that when they came up to carry out their Parliamentary duties in the matter they were met by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who without justification interrupted them with great clamour, and threatened that no further proceedings should take place, and if further proceedings were attempted the speakers would not be allowed to be heard. I was not in the House when these most regrettable threats were made, but at all events I understand they were made, and consequently my hon. friends on this side of the House cannot be said to be without justification in the protest they have made. Having stated, not unfairly, what the case of my hon. friends is, let me state to the House what the case of the other side is. There is no justification for such threats, which are most regrettable. In fact their only possible excuse is that they were made in the heat of passion, when expressions escape us which sometimes we are sorry for afterwards. When my hon. friend who has just sat down states that it was a mere matter of favour to give the Irish Members an opportunity for discussing the financial relations, he had not the full circumstances of the case before him. What exactly occurred was this. It appears that every Member has the right on Budget night to put down a motion, and that motion is in order if it be relevant to any question connected with finance. The result of that is, that but

for the courtesy and consideration of hon. Members it would have been impossible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to lay before the country his Budget proposals, not only to the great inconvenience of the House, but very likely great loss to the national Exchequer. In this particular case the loss to the Exchequer would probably have been calculated by hundreds of thousands of pounds. Under these circumstances the Irish Members undoubtedly, to use a vulgar expression, had the Government in a cleft stick. They had a mortgage on the Government time; they had a bond for the full liquidation of which they were entitled to ask. Under these circumstances I cannot honestly say that it was a matter of favour to grant the Irish Members a day. When, therefore, the Irish Members found that there was the prospect of a debate which would take a long time—which, in previous years, had taken a long time—a sense of grievance naturally arose in their minds. In the heat of passion some threats were made, and some expressions were used which ought not to have been used. But I must ask my friends to consider the position in which the Government is placed. I quite agree that they have reasonable grounds of complaint. I quite agree that when the debate was interrupted by threats a natural and legitimate sense of grievance arose. That, I think, must be admitted on all sides. But that feeling is met by a not less legitimate grievance on the part of hon, Members opposite, and I cannot help thinking that under the circumstances the House would be well advised in accepting the motion which has been made by the hon. Gentleman.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know that it is necessary to say a word in support of the appeal made by the right hon. gentleman, but I have one advantage which he does not possess to the full, namely, that I have sat through the whole of these proceedings. It is evidently, on both sides, a mere matter of misunderstanding from beginning to end. The Irish Members suddenly discovered that this important private Bill was to come on in front of their motion. Hon. Members opposite say that if they had had three-quarters of an hour it would have been sufficient. We know by long experience of what hon. Members are capable, and that the discussion on a private Bill, which excites strong feelings—almost hereditary strong feelings—in the way that this Bill does, might go on until it occupied nearly the whole sitting of the House. It was perfectly natural for the Irish Members to be alarmed as to their prospect. It may be said that they should have noticed that the Bills were down "by Order" for to-day, and raised this point before. But Members must remember that notices of private business do not attract the same attention as notices of public business, and apparently it was not until last night they discovered this fact. In that case what are we to do? It is quite impossible, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, that the Irish Members can, with any show of justice, be deprived of a full night for their discussion. On the other hand, Members who are interested in the London Water Bill divide themselves into two classes: those who are in favour of the Bill are quite willing that the debate should be postponed; therefore, the matter rests with the opponents of the measure. How can they expect the House to look upon them with any great sympathy if, after all that has occurred, they insist on going on with the Bills to-day? I would therefore appeal to them in the strongest fashion not only to allow this motion to be carried, but to agree to it without a division. ["No, no!"] I would point out that they have no fault to find with the way in which the hon. Member behind me has behaved. If this motion is lost, my hon. friend will lose the chance, which he certainly deserves as well as any Member of this House, of taking part in the discussion. Though that is a small and personal point, I think it is one of some weight, and I trust that hon. Members, in addition to all other considerations, will not be guilty of a certain discourtesy to my hon. friend who has had a rather diffieult part to play to-day.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): As a Member who signed a circular suggesting that hon. Members of this House should vote against this Water Bill, perhaps I may venture to appeal to some of my hon. friends not to divide against the motion which has been made for the adjournment of the debate. As I understand, if there had been no altercation at the opening of this discussion, the interest of those who are opposed to these Water

Bills would have been equally served by a discussion on some subsequent occasion. Indeed, I apprehend they would have been better served than to-night, because the Irish Members would probably not be here, and we should make a still better division list than on the present occasion. It seems to me that it is to our interest to have an adjournment, and I believe that everyone would have taken that view but for the way in which the matter has been pressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite. But our true consolation in such a circumstance as this is in another direction. We can console ourselves by the reflection that it was due to the action of the Unionist Members that there was not in existence a Parliament which would habitually demean itself as hon. Members opposite have done. No one can sit in this House for very long and hear Irish Members discussing public business without coming to the conclusion that the whole of the proceedings of a Home Rule Parliament would be an absurdity and a scandal. That may do something to induce us to agree to this motion.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I sincerely trust that neither the House nor any part of it will be influenced by the remarks of the noble Lord who spoke last, but I hope the House will respond to the greater claim which the First Lord of the Treasury has to make an appeal to it. The right hon. Gentleman has earned the right to make that appeal by the work he has done not only for his country, but as Leader of this House, and he has appealed to us, not from the motive or for the reason the noble Lord assigns, but in the interests of public business, and for the efficiency of good government, and, above all, for the dignity of the House of Commons. I trust that in the interest of that dignity the appeal of the First Lord will be responded to by the most intelligent Members who support the Government.

SIR W. HART-DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I have sat here undergoing considerable pain in view of all the circumstances of the case, and it is utterly impossible for any hon. Gentleman, be he a young Member or an old Member, to look upon these scenes with anything like complacency. As usual when there is any uproar and unrest, there are several parties to blame. In the first place, no doubt, hon. Members from Ireland have somewhat misjudged the situation with regard to the debate on the Water Bill. I can assure them, as one who is considerably interested in this London water question, they have completely misjudged the time that the debate would have occupied. We were entering upon a discussion of great moment to this metropolis. At the same time, the question had arrived at such a stage that the dealing with it, to use a common expression, lay in a nutshell. The Report of the late Royal Commission had brought the whole matter into so narrow a focus that anything like a lengthy debate was impossible. I might also mention that just when entering the House I was consulted in the lobby by a number of hon. Members of this side of the House who are considerably interested in this question, and we came to an agreement that not one of us should utter a single syllable during the debate. Therefore I contend that I am right in saying hon. Members opposite completely misjudged the prospects of the debate. At the same time, I acknowledge that they may have had some ground for a sense of soreness—for a feeling that they had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House something which was in reality a sham. But unhappily they proceeded on most unwise lines to urge their protest on the House, and I am bound to say they treated hon. Members on this side of the House with great want of courtesy. We are not disposed to be impatient with hon. Members from Ireland. I know that, so far as my public life is concerned, not one of those hon. Gentlemen can say I have ever treated them unfairly. We have listened to speeches from those benches during this session which have given many of us great pain, but we have listened to them with patience, and neither in this House nor out of it have we said one word against them. Therefore, I think they should treat us with a little more patience than they have done on this occasion. Their method of interrupting this debate has, no doubt, created vast irritation on these benches, and I am not surprised that a number of my hon. friends are very likely prepared to vote against this motion. If they like to do so as a protest, surely no man of common sense can object to their conduct. But

I would make one appeal. There are other things to consider besides this irritation. There is your position in the Chair, Sir. I dislike to see you put to the strain to which you have been put to-day. As one who loves all the precedents which surround the Chair in which you sit, I venture to make an appeal to hon. Members—on your behalf, as one of the best representatives who has sat in that Chair, and on behalf of my right hon. friend the Leader of the House, as one of the best, surest, and most straightforward guides. On these grounds I venture to appeal to hon. Members to let this scene end, and to allow this debate to be adjourned.

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Thursday next.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

"To amend The Central London Railway Act, 1891, with reference to cheap fares for labouring classes," read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

SHANNON WATER AND ELECTRIC POWER BILL.

Ordered, That the Shannon Water and Electric Power Bill be committed to the Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection for the Consideration of other Private Bills relating to electric power.—(*Lord Balcarres.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Basingstoke, Erdington, Farnham, Felixstowe and Walton, Leek, Littleborough, Maryport, Nantwich, Ormskirk, and Penrith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brierley Hill, Cleethorpes-with-Thrunscoe, Elland, Exmouth, Newark, Penzance, Prestwich, Redcar, Sowerby Bridge, and Whitefield, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Basingstoke, Erdington, Farnham, Felixstowe and Walton, Leek, Littleborough, Maryport, Nantwich, Ormskirk, and Penrith," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 137.)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Brierley Hill, Cleethorpes-with-Thrunscoe, Elland, Exmouth, Newark, Penzance, Prestwich, Redcar, Sowerby Bridge, and Whitefield," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 138.)

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MIDWIVES BILL.

Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions, in favour, from King's Lynn; Chichester, Old Walsoken; West Walton; Wisbech (two); and Chatteris; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions, in favour, from Rochdale; Salford; Miles Platting; Trawden; Glasgow; London; Upper Norwood;

Croydon (two); and Wanstead; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions, in favour, from London and Rochdale (two); to lie upon the Table.

TEINDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the United Presbyterian Synod, against; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions, in favour, from Barrowstounness and Pollokshaws; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL WORKS ACTS, 1895, 1896 AND 1897.

Account presented, showing the amount of money issued out of the Consolidated Fund; the amount and nature of the securities created in respect thereof; the amount of the surplus of income over expenditure for the financial year ended 31st March, 1896, and the amount of money expended in pursuance of the Acts during the year ended the 31st March, 1899, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 108.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 7, 1900).

Copy presented of Convention and Declaration between tthe United Kingdom and Germany for the settlement of the Samoan and other questions. Signed at London, 14th December, 1899, Ratifications exchanged at London and Berlin, 16th February, 1900 [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 8, 1900).

Copy presented of Convention between the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States of America for the adjustment of questions relating to Samoa. Signed at Washington, 2nd December, 1899. Ratifications exchanged at London, Berlin, and Washington, 16th February, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 9, 1900).

Copy presented of Treaty between the United Kingdom and the Republic of San Remo for the mutual extradition of fugitive criminals. Signed at Florence, 16th October, 1899. Ratifications exchanged at Rome, 5th December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2390 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House—

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.

Copy of Abstract of the General Annual Account for the year ending 26th July, 1899 [by Act].

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham." Palatine Court of Durham Bill. [*Lords.*]

And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to further amend the Acts relating to the Harbour of Dundee; and for other purposes." [Dundee Harbour Bill, H.L.]

DUNDEE HARBOUR BILL [H.L.]

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LONDON COUNTY TRAMWAYS (No. 2) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—LORD METHUEN, GENERAL WAUCHOPE, AND COLONEL GOUGH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any investigation

is to be made into the charges against Lord Methuen brought by Colonel Gough and other officers; and whether an inquiry demanded by Colonel Gough has been assented to by the War Office.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): No charges have been brought against Lord Methuen by Colonel Gough, or any other officers. Colonel Gough has been informed that an inquiry will be held into his case, but that it cannot be held while the officers who will have to report are actively engaged in conducting operations in the field.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: As a matter of fact, is Colonel Gough not at present at home?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think that arises out of the question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Very well. I will put it to-morrow.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the attention of the authorities of the War Office has been directed to the statement in Lord Methuen's despatch, with reference to the battle of Magersfontein, that General Wauchope had told him that he quite understood his orders, and made no further remark; and has Lord Methuen been asked whether Major-General Wauchope expressed his difference of opinion as to the scheme of operations which, in obedience to his commanding officer, he was ordered to carry out.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative, and to the second in the negative.

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENT—LORD METHUEN'S DESPATCHES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what explanation, if any, has the War Office to offer for the interval that has elapsed of more than two months between the battle of Magersfontein on 10th and 11th December, and the writing of the official despatch describing that battle by Lord Methuen, which is dated 15th February; whether it is the practice that despatches describing engagements should be written by officers in command immediately after the engagements have been fought, when the leading incidents are fresh in the memory; was Lord Methuen requested to furnish his despatch with reference to the battle of Magersfontein by the military authorities at home both by cablegram and letter; how often were these requests made to Lord Methuen, and what are the dates on which they were made; and what were Lord Methuen's replies either by telegram or by letter thereto.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I regret that I am unable to reply in detail to the hon. Member's questions. I may, however, point out that a despatch is a formal document submitted by the officer in command, from which subordinate reports should, as a rule, be excluded. Sir R. Buller originally sent home a communication from Lord Methuen which covered a number of such reports, dated 4th January. Lord Roberts was accordingly asked (6th February) to direct Lord Methuen to embody these in a formal despatch.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Then am I to understand that the despatch dated 15th February is not the original despatch sent by Lord Methuen, but an amended despatch?

*MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member is to understand that this is a despatch, and that the previous communications were not despatches.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Well, but were these previous communications from Lord Methuen? I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker. Am I not entitled to press this question?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Under Secretary has answered the question on the Paper fully, though not perhaps to the satisfaction of the hon. Member.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, Sir.

SIEGE OF KIMBERLEY—MR. RHODES AND COLONEL KEKEWICH.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that during the siege of Kimberley Mr. Cecil Rhodes' organ, the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, was suppressed by the military authority on account of its attacks on British generals, and that Mr. Cecil Rhodes, owing to his interference

with the local military authority, was threatened by such authority with arrest, and by whose orders was it that the arrest was not carried out.

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have no knowledge of these incidents.

PRIVATE PROPERTY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLICS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the declaration made by Sir Alfred Milner is intended to mean that forfeiture of landed property by the Transvaal Government made after the 10th October, 1899, for non-payment of ordinary taxes, or for any other cause, will be annulled by the British Government, or whether that declaration is intended to apply only to non-payment of war tax; and if the latter is the meaning, what facilities, if any, are to be afforded to British subjects to pay the ordinary taxes and to obtain receipts, having regard to the fact that the ordinary channels for such purposes are not available.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The notice issued on 26th January covers cases of confiscation for the non-payment of ordinary rents or licences, as well as those for failure to pay the new War Tax. The War Tax must not in any case be paid, but Her Majesty's Government raise no objection to the payment of ordinary rents or licences under contracts made prior to the commencement of the war.

MR. KIMBER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say by what means or by what conduit persons owing ordinary taxes can pay them, and to whom?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, I do not think it is my business to suggest by what conduit or how they should pay taxes to the Transvaal Government. If the rates of pay are subject to contract prior to the war Her Majesty's Government will not take any proceedings against them.

WIRE NIPPERS.

SIR LEWIS M'IVER (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office what is the total number of pairs of barbed wire nippers which have been supplied to units or despatched in bulk to the Forces in South Africa; and does the War Office contemplate sending out a substantial addition to the supply now at the Cape.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): 8,688 pairs have been sent out or supplied to units. All demands from South Africa have been more than complied with, but further supplies will be sent as they are received from the trade.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): Have any complaints been received about these wire nippers?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Not that I know of.

BOOTS FOR THE TROOPS.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether any reports have been received from South Africa to the effect that the boots supplied to the infantry have again proved to be of inferior quality; and whether large reserve stores of boots are now stored there, and whether more will be forwarded.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The foreign service handsewn steel-billed boot and the hob-nailed boots received from India and Egypt have proved satisfactory for infantry; but Lord Roberts has complained of the home-pattern clump-soled boot. We have sent out, in round numbers, 108,000 home and 132,000 foreign pattern; and more will be sent as fast as they can be procured. The hand-sewn boot trade seems to be an expiring industry, and we are endeavouring to obtain a pattern of machine-sewn boot which shall be equally suitable for home or foreign wear.

QUICK-FIRING GUNS.

MR. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in September, 1890, there was an exhibition by the firm of Gruson, of Magdeburg, Prussia, of quick-firing guns and of carriages adapted for being easily got in and out of position, and that General Joubert and his staff attended on behalf of the South African Republic; and whether he

has any information as to the purchases then made on behalf of the said Republic.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The exhibition was attended by British officers, who duly made their reports; in these it is mentioned that General Joubert was present. It is not known whether he made any purchases at the time.

PROPOSED WAR RECORD COINAGE.

MR. AIRD (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the desirability of placing a distinctive mark upon the remainder of the present year's coinage, or upon some portion of it, as a record of the war in South Africa.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am afraid I cannot entertain the suggestion of my hon. friend. It has not been the practice to make alterations in the designs of the coinage in order to record the wars in which this country has been enaged, and I do not know of any reason for making an exception in the case of the war in South Africa.

WAR FUNDS — PROVISION FOR RELATIVES OF INDIAN CAMP FOLLOWERS.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Transvaal Refugees' and other War Funds, to which our Indian fellow subjects have subscribed, will be available for the relief of the wives and families of the killed and wounded amongst the Indian camp followers, who have been and are serving with Her Majesty's troops in South Africa; and, if not, whether he would use his good offices to enable this purpose to be achieved.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have been in communication with the Patriotic Fund Commissioners, and am informed that arrangements are being made for the grant of relief to the wives and families of Indian camp followers incapacitated on account of service in South Africa.

PRESS CENSORSHIP—SUPPRESSED CABLEGRAMS.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can now state why a cablegram sent on the 14th February last by Mr. Mackarness, chairman of the South Africa Conciliation Committee, to the *South African News*, Cape Town, recording a resolution passed at a Liberal Conference in London, was stopped by the Government Censor at Cape Town; and why no notice of its having been stopped was given for more than a fortnight to the sender.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The military authorities at Cape Town have full discretion to censor any telegram, and there is no intention to interfere with their exercise of that discretion.

BRITISH WOUNDED PRISONERS.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if Her Majesty's Government will communicate with Lord Roberts with a view to obtain at once the release from the Boers of such prisoners as those who were wounded at Glencoe and left at Dundee under the Geneva Convention, proposing, if he is unable to obtain the release of all upon conditions, to obtain at least the release of those who are in need of special medical or surgical treatment, upon their giving their word under certain conditions to place themselves again at the disposal of their captors.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): A communication has been made to Lord Roberts in the sense suggested by my hon. friend.

CONDUCT OF GERMAN SAILORS AT PORTSMOUTH.

MR. NICOL (Argyll): In the absence of the First Lord of the Admiralty I beg to ask the Financial Secretary a question of which I have given private notice, as to whether the attention of the Admiralty has been called to a statement in the public Press, that three cheers for the Boer Republics were given by the sailors of the German battleship "Deutschland," at Portsmouth, under the eyes of their own officers, and whether there is any confirmation of this statement.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): Yes, Sir, the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty has been called to the

statement contained in my hon. friend's question. He has caused inquiries to be made at Portsmouth, and as the result of those inquiries, he believes the report to be a pure fabrication without any foundation whatever.

RESERVE AND MILITIA—OFFICERS' ALLOWANCES.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E., on behalf of the hon. Member for Bath, Colonel WYNDHAM MURRAY): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether officers of the Reserve who have retired on a gratuity earned during past service, and who have now volunteered for duty with the Royal Reserve battalions, have been informed that a deduction will be made from their pay on a calculation according to the value of such gratuity, and whether notice was given of such deduction before their services were accepted; and whether officers who return to mounted duty with reserve battalions will receive a proportionately larger allowance for the provision of horses and saddlery than those returning for company duty.

COLONEL M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.): I beg at the same time to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Militia officers who have served in the Army, and retired on receipt of gratuity, subsequently joining the Militia, are now on embodiment mulcted at the rate of 5 per cent. on such gratuity, thus reducing the pay in the case of a commanding officer who had served in the Army by £60 to £70 a year, as compared with one who had never served.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No officer is allowed to draw both retired pay and full pay; and it has always been held that the gratuities given to officers on retirement are a commutation or capitalising of retired pay. Therefore, unless a deduction is made, it is held that the officer who retired with a gratuity is unfairly favoured as compared with the officer who retired on a pension. But the question is now being again considered. In reply to the second paragraph of the question of the hon. Member for Bath, mounted officers receive higher rates of pay to cover their greater expenses, and no special allowance will be made to them.

CADET BATTALIONS — PROPOSED CAPITATION GRANT.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, E., Toxteth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the desirability of giving further encouragement to the formation and efficient maintenance of cadet battalions, he will in the new Volunteer Regulations consider the desirability of giving to these battalions, besides the official title and the loan of rifles and camp equipment, to which Government assistance is now limited, a capitation grant for each cadet complying with conditions of efficiency, a grant for camp attendance, and a gratuitous issue of ammunition, ball and blank, and travelling expenses to a range for at least one annual attendance.

*MR. WYNDHAM: This question of cadet battalions has been thoroughly considered, and it has been decided not to increase the assistance now given.

SANDHURST CADETS' COMMISSIONS.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the cadets who passed for Sandhurst in June last will receive their commissions, having regard to the fact that they have had six months military training and are generally older than the public school boys who have been given commissions at the age of eighteen.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The cadets at the College who joined last August should leave next June. No commissions have as yet been given to the public schools, nor is it intended to give any until the course at Sandhurst shall have been completed.

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF AUXILIARY FORCES.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in selecting officers for the post of Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces and Recruiting, it has been the practice to attach more weight to their general efficiency as staff officers than to their special knowledge and experience of the Auxiliary forces; and whether it is intended, in filling the new posts on the headquarter staff that will deal with the Auxiliary forces, to select from those who, by serving as adjutants of Auxiliary forces, or by being otherwise employed with them, have acquired special knowledge and experience of those forces.

*MR. WYNDHAM: In reply to the first paragraph the officers have been selected for their general suitability for the various duties entrusted to them. A special acquaintance with the Auxiliary forces will guide the selection of the new staff referred to in paragraph two.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Messrs. Underwood and Sons, Limited, are also trading as Hood and Moore, Mr. Underwood, jun., being managing director, and whether the latter firm contracts for Her Majesty's Government; whether he is also aware that the firm trading under the name of Brown is identical with Underwood; and whether, seeing that Mr. Underwood, sen., is a Justice of the Peace for Brentford, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The solicitors of Hood and Moore's Stores, Limited, inform me that a Mr. H. T. Underwood, one of the directors of that company, is a junior partner in the firm of Underwood and Son. Hood and Moore's Stores are not on the War Office list of contractors. The solicitor of Mr. John Brown informs me that he has commenced an action against Underwood and Son, Limited, in connection with the "Manchester Port" hay. This circumstance would seem to dispose of any suggestion that Brown and Underwood are identical. A Mr. Edwin Underwood who, as late as October, 1898, held shares in Underwood and Son, Limited, is a Justice of the Peace.

MAJOR RASCH: Has the Department yet received the advice of the law officers of the Crown with reference to prosecutions in this case?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No, Sir, but I am expecting it to-morrow.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether on 12th March, when the Return No. 94, Government Contracts, was signed, the War Office were aware that the contractors, whom in the said Return they named as J. E. Bennett and Sons, were really a limited liability company, with the registered statutory name of Underwood and Co., Limited, or Underwood and Son, Limited.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Some days before the presentation of the return a statement reached the War Office pointing to the conclusion that there was a connection between J. E. Bennett and Sons and Underwood and Son. But there was no evidence which would have justified us in stating in a Parliamentary Paper that the two firms were in reality one and the same. The name given in the Return was, therefore, the name which was upon the War Office list. It has since appeared that Underwood and Bennett are identical, and an amended Return will be furnished.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: On what date was proof obtained of the identity of Messrs. Bennett with Messrs. Underwood?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Return was laid on the Table on the 12th, and it was not until four or five days after that date that evidence was received which would have justified the inclusion of Underwood's name.

MILITIA MEDICAL STAFF CORPS PAY.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the pay of privates in the Militia Medical Staff Corps is lower than that of the regular Medical Staff Corps by 2d. a day; and if so, whether there is anything in the nature of the duties of the Militia Medical Staff Corps during embodiment to justify the difference being maintained.

*MR. WYNDHAM: My hon. friend is under a misapprehension. On embodiment the rates of pay are the same.

SOUTH CORK MILITIA—NON-PAYMENT OF BOUNTY.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office what is the cause of the delay in paying the bounty to which the men of the South Cork Militia (3rd Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers), recently called out for special service and since discharged, are entitled in respect of such service, and when the bounty will be paid.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am sorry I must again ask my hon. friend to postpone this question.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: May I call attention to the fact that this question has been now on the Paper for a fortnight, and that the delay in answering it is a great aggravation of the grievance complained of.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I admit that that is so, and I greatly regret it. I have done all I could to get the question answered, but unfortunately I have failed. The matter has not been lost sight of, and notice will be taken of the delay.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Will the hon. Gentleman ask if the delay in giving this bounty to the soldiers has been deliberately contrived in order to punish them for not volunteering for the front?

[No answer was given.]

MILITIA OFFICERS' GRATUITIES.

COLONEL M'CALMONT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why the bonus of £100 given to officers of Militia regiments on disembodiment instead of mess allowance is to be withheld from adjutants and quartermasters.

*MR. WYNDHAM: This gratuity is given on disembodiment to all officers sent back to civil life after a period of temporary employment. There are no grounds for giving it to officers who are continuously employed on full pay.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECRUITING AGENTS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the revised instructions for the employment of recruiting agents will be issued.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The revised instructions are in the hands of the printer. It is hoped that they will be issued in a few days.

MAGAZINE RIFLES.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether having regard to the importance in modern warfare of rapidity of loading, to the admitted inferiority in that particular of the service rifle now supplied to our troops, and to the m voted by Parliament for the equip of the Army, the War Office will sider the propriety of taking immed steps to bring the British service ri respect of its loading arrangements u an equality with the rifle in use by Boers, and with the other well-kn rifles, so that our soldiers may not placed at a disadvantage in the fie compared with the soldiers of o Powers.

*MR. WYNDHAM: It is not admi that the British rifle is inferior in ra continuous fire to the rifle of any o Power. Experiments are, however, b made to secure greater expedition in process of replenishing the exi magazine. It should be rememb that our rifle is intended to be normally as a single-loader; the mag with its ten cartridges being kept reserve.

LIGHTHOUSES IN THE RED SE

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (L pool, Exchange): I beg to ask the U Secretary of State for Foreign Affai he can say what progress has been i in the construction of the four new l houses in the Red Sea—namely, tho Mocha, Zebair, Abu Ail, and Jebel which, it was stated last year, had arranged for by the Porte with the ministration des Phares.

*MR. BRODRICK: No progres regard to the construction of these new lights has been reported to Majesty's Government.

RUSSIA AND TURKEY—RAILW CONCESSIONS.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Re I beg to ask the Under Secretary of S for Foreign Affairs have Her Maje Government received any informa relative to the demand made of Government of Turkey by the Rus Government of an exclusive concessio the railway line from Kara Ourgha Erzeroum, and the further demand of concession of a railway from Samsou Siwas; have they any information to effect that M. Zinoview, the Russian bassador at Constantinople, has infor the Turkish Government that Ru forbids Turkey to grant to any o person or government than Russia

railway concession whatever in the north of Anatolia; did the British Ambassador at Constantinople have an audience of His Majesty the Sultan on the 2nd March, and were the Russian demands then made the subject of communications; and can he say what attitude Her Majesty's Government proposes to adopt with regard to these demands.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): I beg at the same time to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the Russian Government has applied to the Porte for a concession conferring upon them the right of vetoing the construction of railways in the northern provinces of Asiatic Turkey; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that the exercise of any such right must seriously impede or render impossible the amelioration of the condition of the population of these provinces, Her Majesty's Government have made any, or intend to make, any representations to the Turkish or Russian Governments on the subject.

*MR. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government are unable to give information to the House respecting the negotiations between Turkey and Russia, which are understood to be of a confidential nature, nor would it be convenient to make any declaration of policy with regard to them. Sir N. O'Conor had an audience of the Sultan on the date mentioned. It is contrary to usage to make public the subjects treated on such occasions, but no reference was made to Russian claims or demands.

TREATIES WITH FOREIGN POWERS.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will state the number of treaties and conventions that have been concluded between Great Britain and Foreign Powers since 1st January, 1899, and give the names of the Foreign Powers with whom such treaties and conventions have been concluded.

*MR. BRODRICK: The hon. Member will find in the library various treaties and conventions which have been concluded between Great Britain and Foreign Powers since 1st January, 1899. They are about twenty in number.

MR. HEDDERWICK: Have any treaties or conventions been concluded which have not been published?

[The answer was inaudible.]

UGANDA RAILWAY CONTRACTS.

MR. ENGLEDEW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, in arranging freight for transport of material for the Uganda Railway, the Crown Agents for the Colonies employed any firm of shipbrokers; if so, who were they, and what commission was paid such firm of brokers; and did the Crown Agents charge their one per cent. on such commission.

*MR. BRODRICK: The Crown Agents for the Colonies have employed their shipping agents, Messrs. J. and A. B. Freeland, in arranging freight for Uganda Railway materials, and have paid them sixpence per ton for their services. The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative.

ARMENIA—BRITISH CONSULATE AT BITLIS.

EARL PERCY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it has been decided to abolish the British Consulate at Bitlis; and, if not, whether any steps have been taken since last October to fill the vacancy.

*MR. BRODRICK: The British Vice-Consulate at Bitlis has not been abolished. The post is at present vacant, but is visited as occasion arises by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, and if events should occur in Armenia rendering an appointment desirable, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has authority to take the necessary steps.

COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE DRAFT COPYRIGHT BILL.

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any replies have yet been received from the Colonial Governments to which the draft Copyright Bill, which passed the House of Lords last year, was forwarded; and, if so, what is the nature of those replies.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The only replies at present received are those of the

Cape Colony, Natal, and South Australia. South Australia, in view of the approach of Australian federation, desires at present to express no opinion on the provisions of the Bill. Cape Colony and Natal report favourably on the Bill, but suggest certain modifications in points of detail for its improvement, which it would be impossible to explain within the limits of an answer to the hon. Member's question.

THE WAIMA CLAIMS.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea Districts): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has caused to be paid to relatives of the British officers killed in December, 1893, at Waima the sum of £200 in part satisfaction of their claim for compensation pending the termination of the negotiations with the Republic of France; and whether, seeing that some of these relatives are still in difficult and straitened circumstances, he will now arrange to pay them such compensation as the Government might have reasonably claimed, or still may reasonably claim, from the Republic of France by way of indemnity.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The sum named in the first paragraph of the question has been paid. It was recommended by the Foreign Office to be paid by way of temporary relief, and I agreed to the recommendation on learning from the Foreign Office that the French Government were prepared to accept arbitration and admit the principle of an indemnity to the British sufferers, if it was established that Waima was in British territory, a matter which, in the opinion of the Foreign Office, was no longer in doubt. I am not aware, however, that any progress has been made in the matter since which would justify the request made in the latter part of the question.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman grant a further sum, seeing that some of these people are in somewhat straitened circumstances?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think not. It must be remembered that they have already received more than is given to the relatives of officers killed in action.

STAMP DUTY ON DEBENTURES.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Board of Inland Revenue in March last demanded from a large number of companies payment of extra stamp duty upon debentures and other securities in respect of the premiums at which the companies had reserved the option of redeeming such debentures; and, under threat of penalties being inflicted, a large number of companies paid such demand, and at great expense and commercial inconvenience got in such debentures and had them extra stamped; will he explain why, seeing that in December last the Court of Appeal decided that the demand of the Inland Revenue Department was illegal, the Department has refused to refund the extra duty unless the companies will again call in the debentures and produce them to have the stamps obliterated, which the companies have no power to compel the holders to do, and in many cases cannot do, and much further expense and commercial inconvenience would be occasioned thereby to thousands of investors and holders; whether he has considered or will be advised by the Law Officers upon the question of the legal liability of the Crown to repay the money without imposing the condition in question; and whether he can see any way of affording relief to those aggrieved.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The first paragraph no doubt refers to a circular which the Board issued in March, 1899, although it hardly describes the Board's proceedings accurately. In December, 1899, the decision of the High Court, to which the circular relates, was reversed by a judgment of the Court of Appeal. The Board have decided to acquiesce in this latter judgment, and they have agreed to repay duty that was paid under protest, or with any implied understanding that the question of amount of duty might be reconsidered after the appeal had been decided. In considering claims for repayment, the Board have felt compelled to waive exact compliance with the provisions of the Stamp Duties Management Act, 1891, for allowances on stamp duties paid in error, in respect of certain minor details. But they have not felt at liberty to carry their concession to the length of repaying duty on instruments not produced for cancellation of stamps. It must be borne in mind that from the middle of December, 1898, when the decision in the Divisional Court was

delivered, until December, 1899, when the decision was reversed in the Court of Appeal, the Board had no option but to act on the interpretatian of the law which had been declared by the High Court.

MR. KIMBER: Does the right hon. Gentleman see any way of giving relief to parties aggrieved?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not see any way of dealing with the matter.

INCREASED EXCISE DUTIES—DIFFICULTIES OF CLEARANCE.

MR. KIMBER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, on the day preceding the day on which the new duty on tea and other articles came into force, over 100 firms presented themselves at the Customs, money in hand, to withdraw goods out of bond within the usual hours of the Customs offices being open for that purpose, but were unable to do so in time in consequence of the office being closed prematurely, and many who were there in time were thereby prevented from paying their money, and in consequence have had to pay a higher rate of duty; whether any instructions were given by the Treasury to the Customs officers authorising them to reduce the time or facilities for paying such duties; and whether Her Majesty's Government are under obligation at all times to provide such facilities (that is, clerks or tellers and office accommodation) as will enable traders to freely withdraw their goods from bonded warehouses.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A large number of firms attempted, unsuccessfully, to pay duty, at the London Custom House, on the 5th inst. within the usual hours. They were prevented from paying not by a premature closing of the office (which was not closed before the usual hour), but by the crowd. The instructions given by the Treasury to the Board of Customs, with regard to both London and the whole country, were not to reduce the time or facilities for payment, but to abstain from extending the same. Her Majesty's Government hold that the obligation to provide facilities to traders for the withdrawal of their goods from bonded warehouses is limited by the ordinary conditions of hours and staff.

SOUTH-EASTERN AND CHATHAM RAILWAY—WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, his attention has been drawn to a letter written by the general manager of the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway Company, in which it is stated that cheap tickets for workmen are not intended to be issued to workmen who are not in constant daily employment; whether he has noticed a case in which a cheap ticket has been refused to a working woman who comes regularly once a week to work in London; and whether, by legislation or otherwise, he can take steps to prevent such limitation of the benefit of the Cheap Trains Act.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I have been in communication with the managing committee of the South-Eastern and Chatham and Dover Railways and have received a reply to the following effect:—The managing committee found that a large number of persons who were not working men or women within any possible construction of the Act were obtaining "workmen's tickets," and it therefore became necessary to issue special instructions to the committee's servants with a view to stopping the practice. Unfortunately a mistake was made with regard to the particular case to which the hon. Member's question refers, and since the facts have been made known to the managing committee, orders have been given that a workman's ticket shall be issued in future. It would appear, therefore, that the occurrence referred to was an accidental one, and that there is no intention on the part of the companies mentioned to limit in any way the operations of the Cheap Trains Act or of the provisions respecting workmen's tickets contained in the recent Amalgamation Act; as evidence of this the company informs me that during the past year more than a million and a quarter workmen's tickets were issued in excess of the number for the previous twelve months.

THE COMPANIES BILL.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the clauses in the Companies Bill which give unsecured creditors preferential right of payment over creditors secured by debentures and

debenture stock, whether he will give the House a week's notice of bringing on the Second Reading instead of inserting it in the Orders every day.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to draw your attention, Sir, to this question. Is it not disorderly, as it embodies the opinion of the hon. Member as to the construction of an Act of Parliament? It is in precisely the same words as a motion which the hon. Member has put down.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question is whether the right hon. Gentleman will give the House a week's notice before taking the Second Reading of a certain Bill. That is not a matter of opinion.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With great respect, Sir, the sentence beginning "having regard" embodies a matter of opinion.

*MR. SPEAKER: It does not follow because words which introduce the question suggest an opinion that the question becomes one as to a matter of opinion.

MR. RITCHIE: My right hon. friend the Leader of the House said the other day that to undertake to give a week's notice of the taking of a Bill would seriously inconvenience business, and I therefore cannot undertake to give it in this case. As much notice as possible will be given.

MR. BRYCE: (Aberdeen, S.): May I take it that there is no intention of taking the Bill before Easter?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman can assume that.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Did not the First Lord promise at least three days notice?

MR. RITCHIE: I think he said something about that.

PRISONS—FLOGGING REGULATIONS.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are any and what regulations providing for the special medical examination of persons sentenced to flogging as to their fitness to undergo such punishment, before it is inflicted; whether the gaol surgeon or any other officer has power to suspend or dispense with such a sentence if in his opinion the constitution of the person sentenced to flogging is not fit to bear it; and what precautions are taken, and in whom is the duty vested to ascertain whether juvenile offenders sentenced to whipping are able to bear it without danger to health.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Rule 87 (Local Prisons Rules) directs that corporal punishment shall not be inflicted unless the medical officer has certified that the prisoner is in a fit condition to undergo the punishment. Rule 182 (1) also directs that before a prisoner is subjected to corporal punishment the medical officer shall examine him and certify whether or not he is fit for the punishment. Rule 182 (2) directs that the instructions of the medical officer for preventing injury to health by corporal punishment shall be obeyed. These rules apply also to juvenile offenders sentenced to whipping when such whipping is carried out by the prison authorities. Whippings administered by the police are subject to similar police regulations. The rules for convict prisons contain similar provisions to those in force in local prisons with respect to convicts ordered to be flogged for prison offences.

INCOME TAX SURVEYORS' DISTRICTS.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in view of the increase in the rate of income tax, what steps have been taken to increase the number of surveyors' districts, and whether any, and what, number of new districts have been at present constituted; whether the position and prospects of the surveyor's clerks will be improved in any degree; and whether provision will be made that the promotion of other officers shall not be prejudiced by the retention on public grounds of those who have passed the limits of age and service laid down in the order of the Board of Inland Revenue, No. 10, of 1897 (18th June).

MR. HANBURY: The increase in the rate of income tax does not necessarily involve any considerable increase in the

surveyors' duties. The real cause of difficulty in recent years has been the increase of abatements. But, apart from this, an addition of twenty-five surveyorships was approved by the Treasury in 1898, and nine new districts have already been created under this authority. Arrangements are now being made for creating eleven more as soon as the Board have officers qualified to fill them. It is hoped that this will be in the course of the next few months. The other matters referred to are under the consideration of the Board of Inland Revenue.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—CONTRACTS FOR LIVE STOCK TRANSPORTS.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that shipowners compel consignors of live stock to sign contracts or consignment notes which absolve the shipowners from their legal liabilities as carriers; and whether he will consider the advisability of amending the law in this respect.

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir, I am not aware that shipowners compel, or are able to compel, any class of traders to sign contracts absolving them from their legal liabilities, and I am certainly not prepared to propose any legislation on the subject.

POST OFFICE ANNUITIES.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he would take into consideration the question of revising the scale of payments for immediate annuities payable to persons above the age of eighty years, so that persons above that age should be able to obtain a reduction in the cost of an annuity corresponding to their more advanced age.

MR. HANBURY: The matter is not one for the Post Office, but for the National Debt Commissioners. I can add nothing to the answer given to a similar question by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on May 10, 1897,* which ran as follows—

"Very few complaints have reached either the Post Office or the National Debt Commissioners with regard to the point to which attention is called in the question. I will consider the matter, but I cannot undertake to amend the table of annuities in the manner desired. There is a difficulty about securing proof as to the age of very old people, and I am told that the chances of life are not diminished in proportion to the difference between the ages of 80 and 85. I understand that insurance companies find similar precautions necessary to prevent loss on annuities at these great ages."

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xlix., page 104.

TELEPHONING CABLEGRAMS.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a considerable grievance exists among the commercial communities, notably in Liverpool, in consequence of the regulation requiring the transmission to their destination of cable messages received from America through the Post Office, and that this system necessarily involves delay and waste of time, entailing the loss of transactions, especially in cases where the messages are received about the closing hours of business; and if he would undertake so to modify this regulation as to permit the cable companies themselves to send the messages through the telephone direct to their destination, in view of the boon to the trading communities, the saving of Post Office labour, and the ease with which the number and cost of all such telephonic messages could be checked by a system of daily supervision of the accounts of the telephone company.

MR. HANBURY: Arrangements have already been made at Liverpool for telephoning the American cable messages direct to subscribers of the National Telephone Company from the Exchange Branch Post Office, which immediately adjoins the offices of the cable companies. The suggestion made by the hon. Member would involve a modification of the terms of the National Telephone Company's licence, and it is obviously undesirable to take such a step to meet a limited local requirement.

MANCHESTER POSTMEN'S STRIPES.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the Postmaster General will cause the additional stripes to be given to two Manchester postmen, namely, A. Hill and A. Guard, which are overdue if their junior service is counted as half.

MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir. It is largely the men's own fault they have not received them already.

MR. SCHWANN: Did they not send a memorial to the Postmaster General twelve months ago?

MR. HANBURY: Yes; but they asked that the whole of their previous service should count for stripes, whereas the Tweedmouth Committee recommended that only half should count.

CABLE DELAYS TO RUSSIA.

MR. A. G. H. GIBBS (London): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that fresh delays have arisen in the transmission of telegrams from Russia through the Great Northern Company's cable at Newcastle, and whether the Postmaster General can give any guarantee that steps will be taken by the Post Office to prevent these constant interruptions, and when will he be prepared to state what steps will be taken by the Post Office.

MR. HANBURY: The delays to which the hon. Member refers are attributable to the interruption of the land wires of the Great Northern Telegraph Company caused by the fresh snowstorms which occurred a few days ago. The Postmaster General is afraid he cannot give any guarantee against such interruptions. They are happily not of the constant nature assumed in the hon. Member's question, but the Postmaster General will be glad to consider whether, by altering the route of one of the wires or in any other way, the risk of total interruption can be diminished.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT—ATHY UNION CHARGES.

MR. ENGLEDEW (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the charges in the Athy Union outstanding under the Labourers Acts at the time of the passing of the Local Government Act of 1898 are district charges, specific areas having been fixed by special resolutions of the guardians from time to time as the several schemes were being promoted, and which were approved of by the several Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board prior to the passing of the Local Government Act; and whether the Local Government Board had power under the Local Government Act, 1898, to alter the areas already charged under the Labourers Acts in cases where all the expenses had been incurred and loans made before the passing of the Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N., for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The reply to the first paragraph of the question is in the affirmative. The Local Government Board have been advised that by the combined effect of the 44th and 57th Sections of the Local Government Act charges for labourers' cottages, whether erected before or after the passing of the Act, became district charges leviable off the district. They were so held to be in fixing the amount of the Agricultural Grant. Had the hon. Member's contention been adopted they would, as special expenses, have been excluded from that calculation.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION APPEALS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland is he can state on what principle the Land Commission acts in accelerating the hearing of appeals in particular cases; and is there any rule for the guidance of litigants anxious to have their cases heard before their turn arrives in ordinary course.

MR. ATKINSON: All fair rent appeals from each county or district are listed for hearing in the order in which the notices of appeal are received in the office of the Land Commission. Any application to have a case taken out of its turn must be made to the Commissioners sitting in court in Dublin upon notice to the opposite party. There is no prescribed rule bearing on the subject. every case must depend on its special circumstances.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is the acceleration done behind the backs of the parties?

MR. ATKINSON: Not that I am aware of. If the hon. Gentleman will put a question down I will inquire further.

LADYSMITH DISTURBANCES IN BELFAST.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland

whether he is aware that a Roman Catholic, named Francis Mooney, died suddenly at Douglas Street, Belfast, owing, it is alleged, to injuries inflicted upon him by Orangemen in Belfast on the occasion of the relief of Ladysmith; and whether he can state what course the Government intend to take to bring the guilty parties to justice in this case.

MR. ATKINSON: An inquest was opened in this case on the 20th inst., and stands adjourned to the 26th inst. Pending the finding of the coroner's jury I do not consider it desirable to make any statement as to the circumstances attending the man's death. After the inquest has terminated I shall endeavour to answer any question the hon. Member may put to me on that subject.

CLONES POST OFFICE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, is the portion of the general shop in Clones which is used as a post office in that town partitioned off in any way from other parts of the premises; what is its area in square feet; and can he say how many post office employees are engaged about the place.

MR. HANBURY: The answer to the first paragraph is—No. The area used for post office purposes is 178 square feet. There are six indoor officers, twelve postmen, and two boy messengers.

MONAGHAN POSTAL STAFF.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, how many officials, including the postmaster, money order clerks, telegraphists, letter deliverers, telegraph messengers, rural messengers, and mail car drivers, are employed in and about the Monaghan Post Office; of these how many are females; what is the cubic feet space of the usable portion of the building; and what are the sanitary arrangements, and is provision made for separate accommodation of the sexes; and will he direct a report to be made upon the sanitary state of the post office in question.

MR. HANBURY: There are twenty-one men and one woman. I do not understand the third paragraph. The cubic content of the rooms used for official purposes is 10,000 feet, exclusive of the space used for stores, batteries, etc. The only woman employed is at the railway station. The sanitary condition of the office was investigated a short time since, and what was considered necessary has been done.

IRISH SUB-POSTMASTERS' DUTIES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the new regulations, extending the hours during which sub-post offices in Ireland are kept open on Sundays for telegraph business and the sale of stamps, has doubled the Sunday duties of sub-postmasters without allowing any additional remuneration; and whether it is intended to compensate sub-postmasters for this additional work.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General has already sanctioned payment according to authorised rates to sub-postmasters in Ireland whose attendance on Sundays has been increased, and such payment will take effect from the date in each case on which the new arrangements came into operation.

DUBLIN POLICE AND THE LICENSING LAWS.

MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that a feeling of dissatisfaction prevails among the licensed vintners in Dublin at the manner in which the metropolitan police exercise their right to visit public houses in search of breaches of the Licensing Laws; whether it is with the sanction of the Commissioners that the houses of respectable traders are being constantly visited by a sergeant accompanied by one or two constables, the customers at the bar interrogated and called upon to stand up to see if they are sober; if he can say how many such visits have been made in the metropolian police district within the past year; how many in the district comprehended by the C Division, and the number of prosecutions arising out of these visits; and whether steps will be taken to stop this practice.

MR. ATKINSON: I have no information that the fact is as alleged in the first

paragraph. The practice of inspecting public houses is not peculiar to Dublin. In the year 1899 there were 23,047 such visits made within the metropolitan police district. In Liverpool in the same period the number of visits made by the police of that city was 101,723. This duty in Dublin is performed under the direction of the Chief Commission of Police. All classes of licensed premises are visited, irrespective of the respectability or otherwise of the proprietor. Customers are only interrogated or required to stand up when there is reason to think they are to some extent intoxicated. In the C Division there are 184 public houses, which were visited 3,218 times, resulting in thirty prosecutions in the past year. The Chief Commissioner does not propose to make any change as suggested. If the hon. Member is aware of any particular case in which the police are alleged to have acted improperly, I will be glad to cause inquiry to be made upon being furnished with particulars of the case.

MR. HARRINGTON: I shall draw attention to this objectionable practice on the Estimates.

INNISKILLEN ASSIZES—ASSESSMENT ON COUNTY CAVAN.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the recent assizes at Inniskillen, being the assize court in and for the county of Fermanagh, the judge assessed a sum of £30 on two divisions of county Cavan, although neither the clerk of the rural district or the county council of Cavan were apprised by notice of such claim on their district; and whether by legislation or otherwise he will take steps to provide redress to councils in such cases.

MR. ATKINSON: The Judge of Assize exercised, on the occasion mentioned, the same jurisdiction as that formerly exercised by the Judges of Assize under the Grand Jury System. The practice having worked well, it is not proposed to alter it by legislation.

LAND VALUATION—ANNALY ESTATE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that six tenants on the Annaly (Ratheline) Estate signed agreements to have their rents fixed by the Court Valuers, but the latter have not yet (although these agreements were signed some months ago) visited or inspected the holdings or given their decision; and will he call for an explanation of such conduct.

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member has been misinformed. In the only cases of the nature mentioned from this estate, the holdings have long since been inspected and the rents fixed.

KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL SECRETARY.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board have ordered the Kerry County Council to pay to their Secretary, Mr. R. Fitzgerald, who is a transferred officer from the old Grand Jury, previously in receipt of a full legal salary of only £293 per year as Secretary and Acting Treasurer, a salary of £1,000 for the year ending 31st March, 1900, although the Secretary to the Local Government Board for Ireland only receives £900 per year; whether Mr. Fitzgerald was in receipt of any legal emoluments or statutory fees in addition to his salary; and, if so, what was the amount per annum; and whether he can state on what grounds the Local Government Board ordered the Kerry County Council to increase the salary from £293 to £1,000 for the year ending 31st March, 1900.

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. Fitzgerald is a transferred officer from the Grand Jury. His salary as secretary to that body, exclusive of statutory fees and other emoluments, was £293 a year, but his total salary and emoluments, as a reference to Parliamentary Return No. 237 of the session of 1898 will show, amounted to £987 per annum. The duties of the post are very difficult and complicated owing to the large number of separate charges due to railway guarantees, etc., and for his increased duties under the Local Government Act Mr. Fitzgerald only receives £13 per annum, that is to say the difference between £987 and £1,000. I may mention that the County Council were almost evenly divided on the question

whether Mr. Fitzgerald's salary should be £800 or £1,000, and that they decided to offer him a salary at the former rate.

MR. DALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain how it is that the Secretary of the Local Government Board, who has to deal with all the Irish counties, only gets £900 a year?

*MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the County Council by a large majority fixed the salary at £500 a year?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice.

BALTIMORE RAILWAY EXTENSION.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any contract has yet been entered into for carrying out the proposed railway extension at Baltimore to deep water; and, if not, can he state the cause of the delay.

MR. ATKINSON: At the request of my right hon. friend, I will reply to this question. The Irish Government are not aware that any contract has been entered into for the extension of the Baltimore Railway to deep water, nor are they aware that any company proposes to promote the construction of the railway. With regard to the question of financial co-operation on the part of the Government, I must refer to the reply given by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to the similar inquiry of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin on the 24th July last*, to which I have nothing to add.

IRISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland, whether he is aware that no representative of the South of Ireland at present occupies a seat upon the Congested Districts Board; and whether steps will be taken to rectify the omission.

MR. ATKINSON: The constitution of the Congested Districts Board is regulated by the 34th Section of the Purchase of Land Act, 1891. I have no reason to believe that the interests of the congested districts in the south of Ireland have been neglected, and there is, at present, no vacancy on the Board.

IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland what is the cause of the delay in printing the Report, laid upon the Table of the House on the 19th of February, setting forth the names of persons committed for contempt of court in Ireland, and when is the Report likely to be in the hands of Members.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware that there has been any unavoidable delay in the printing of this Return. In any case the matter is not one in which the Irish Government have any responsibility. The Return, I understand, will be ready for distribution in a few days.

MEATH MAIN ROADS.

MR. GIBNEY (Meath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether the Local Government Board for Ireland have refused the appeal of Navan and Kells Urban Councils against the decision of the county council of Meath to declare no main roads in the county; and, if so, on what grounds the Local Government Board so decided.

MR. ATKINSON: The reply to this question is in the affirmative. The Local Government Board were of opinion that these Urban Councils failed to establish a case for reversing the decision of the County Council—a decision which was approved of by seven of the eight Rural District Councils in the county.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the Leader of the House state what the arrangements for business next week will be?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On Monday we shall take Committee on the Budget, and we shall continue that *de die in diem* until it is finished. As I do not know how long it will last, I cannot give any further information.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman with pro-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxv., page 84.

priety say anything as to the date or duration of the Easter recess, or whether he will be able to make a statement on the subject on Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that it is rather early to indulge in these agreeable and prophetic speculations. For my own part I hope the holidays will begin early and will last long. That is my strong personal desire, but I cannot promise any such luxury to the House until I see what progress we are able to make with public business. I ought perhaps to say, to correct any misapprehension with regard to the answer which I have just given, that when I said that Committee will continue on the Budget *de die in diem*, I meant on the nights on which the Government have the whole of the time. I did not mean to include Wednesdays.

NEW BILL.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley, and the Lord Advocate.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139.]

FINANCIAL RELATIONS (ENGLAND AND IRELAND).

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): In rising to propose the resolution which stands in my name I have first to express my acknowledgments to the Government for setting apart the evening for this purpose, and I think I may claim for myself some credit for not availing myself of the opportunity the discussion on the Budget proposals afforded, an opportunity even more suitable than the present, because those proposals had reference to the whole financial arrangements of the year. I am not so foolish as to imagine that if I had made use of that occasion it would have affected the resolutions arrived at by the House, and I content myself with entertaining a hope that the views that will now be put forward may have some effect on future Budgets. I forwent that opportunity by yielding to the diplomatic persuasions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Tiverton, and his representations that such a discussion would, by delaying the passing of the Budget resolutions, involve very substantial loss to the Exchequer, without, of course, any advantage to the purpose to be served. The motion which I have put on the Paper refers to two subjects as ground for claiming some modification of existing fiscal arrangements between the two countries. One is to be found in the economic conditions in Ireland, and the other in the findings of the Financial Relations Commission which reported some years ago. I do not intend to quote many figures, and I will abstain from making long citations from the Report. A number of considerations relating to the economic condition of Ireland have important and direct bearing on fiscal matters. These considerations deal with things perfectly well known and very simple, but many of them do not receive the attention they deserve, and are not allowed the weight due to them in the fiscal arrangements now in operation. First there is the steady and serious diminution in the population of Ireland. I take only figures from the present reign. In 1841 the population of Ireland was 8,175,000. In fifty years, as the census for 1891 showed, the population gradually dwindled to 4,704,000; and during the decade now drawing to its close the diminution has continued, and it may be assumed that the census of 1901 will show a population of less than 4½ millions. Four millions of the population have gone from the island within the lifetime of most of the Members I am addressing. Yet the race is not failing. For every centenarian in England a dozen can be shown in Ireland. The disappearance is due to emigration: the people are going away. The number of emigrants between 1845 and 1851 cannot, I believe, be accurately ascertained, but between 1851 and 1898 official returns show that the

number of emigrants from Ireland reached a total of 3,751,000. The stream of late years has not been running less by reason of diminution of the body from which it is drawn. In the decade 1871–1881, 629,130 left the country, while in the ten years from 1881 to 1891 no less than 768,105 people were drained away. When these figures are quoted, not the whole story is by any means told. To present their significance from a national and economical point of view it is necessary to realise how the stream is composed. Of the emigrants, male and female, between 1881 and 1891 no less than 61 per cent. were of ages between twenty and forty-five years, and of 395,000 men emigrated in that decade 220,000 were of ages between eighteen and thirty-five. In the fifty years between 1841 and 1891 1,806,256 men went away, 60 per cent. of whom were of the ages I have mentioned. What does this mean? It means first of all that if, instead of her population being gradually reduced by the unchecked process of emigration, Ireland had been for the whole of that period engaged in war and had lost a complete army corps of 22,000 men in killed every year for fifty years, the country would not be worse off by a single man than it is now. Secondly, it means that of those who have gone away by the million the majority were in the flower of life and precisely those who, from a national and industrial point of view, the country can least afford to lose. With their departure many local industries drooped and died. To take a small illustration from rustic life, the occupation of the blacksmith; these and their assistants in 1841 in Ireland numbered 24,000; now they are but 3,000. In all trades and professions the census returns show a falling off. One class only shows an increase, and this class is enumerated in the census returns under the heading "Government." In 1881 these figured at 5,868; in 1891 they had gone up 20 per cent. to 6,900. What has been the experience of the chief industry of Ireland? Of 20½ million acres of which the surface of Ireland consists, crops of every kind, root crops, cereals, clover, meadowing, all taken together do not cover a quarter of the whole. More than half the country is returned as under grass. Much of it was once under crops; most of it has deteriorated; much that was grass some years ago has gone back to bog and waste. I have by me figures which I should like to quote to the House of the total number of acres under crop during the last six years. In 1894 there were 4,930 acres: 1895, 4 880; 1896, 4,843; 1897, 4,745; 1898, 4,704; and in 1899, 4,623 acres. There is an average loss of 60,000 acres under crop per annum during that period. Her Majesty the Queen is about to visit Ireland. I trust that there may be nothing to impair the personal enjoyment of Her Majesty, and that the sunshine of spring may be in harmony with the native courtesy of the people there, and that her visit will result in nothing but pleasure. Her Majesty has been in Ireland before—I believe on two occasions—on one occasion at any rate more than fifty years ago. The circumstances of the present visit as compared with the circumstances of her earlier visit will exhibit what? A population diminished by half, industry languishing, the land going out of cultivation, and for the most part provincial towns and villages in decay. I cannot help thinking of those words in the 14th chapter of Proverbs—

> "In the multitude of people is the King's honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince."

These being the facts, what, I would ask, are the causes of so extraordinary a depopulation? Is it that the people are glad and willing to go? There is no people on this earth more attached to their homes or more reluctant to leave the land of their birth. They go because they are obliged to go by stern necessity. They go regretfully, and they go because it is impossible for them to remain. They go for this reason, and for this reason only, that they cannot find in their own country the means of living, and this although even now there is more raised there for the sustenance of man than is necessary to keep them comfortably, and with such luxuries as would suffice to make them happy. But the reason for this is that so large a proportion of the product of industry is drained away from the country that there is not enough left for the decent maintenance of the producer. The drain is through various channels, some large, some small; but the chief channel is the one through which rent is conveyed elsewhere. I am not concerned now to consider the character of the land laws of Ireland. They may be

good or they may be bad, but I am concerned now with the relation between landlord and tenant, and the effect of the existing state of things upon Ireland as a community. But in order to appreciate the significance of the problem before us it is necessary to bear in mind first of all that agriculture is the chief industry in Ireland, and Ireland is an agricultural country. Secondly we find that there is, and always has been in Ireland, a standard of rent which is artificial and exorbitant, and we find that from that exaggerated fund of rent an immense proportion is drained away out of the country altogether, and this has an important bearing upon the fiscal conditions of the country as a whole. I wonder how many English Members practically know anything about how the present situation in Ireland arose. I wonder how many English Members at this moment are aware that the average Irishman was not allowed until the year 1878 even to take a long lease of land. I wonder how many English Members are aware that it was only a very few years before that that a great concession was made to the average Irishman that, instead of tilling the land which he was not allowed to own, he was allowed half an acre of arable land from the landlord on this condition, that he reclaimed fifty acres of bog for the landlord. Even then, all these holdings made legal by the Statutes I have referred to were subject to a pre-existing condition, namely, that he should, in all cases, at least give two-thirds of the full improved annual value to the landlord. What was the result of those Statutes? Why this—that there was established an artificial and exorbitant standard of rent in Ireland such as has never been known in any other country. And as for generations the Irish people remained practically tenants at will, and there came to be established in this way the present institutions of the country, and the right of taking two-thirds of the output of the soil as the landlord's portion. In England the majority of the landlords dealt with the farms as going concerns, and the English tenant when rents were highest paid only one-third of the produce of the land under the name of rent, and that for a farm rented as a going concern. But for generations the people of Ireland have been paying two-thirds of the total output of the land to the owners. When out of this immense fund of rent a large portion has been [illegible] away out of the country, as it has [illegible] for 100 years or more, to absentee [illegible] lords or to individuals living here or [illegible] corporate bodies; when we find [illegible] millions have been drawn away from [illegible] country with such limited resources, is [illegible] any wonder that that country is impov[illegible] ished, and has that fact alone not a ve[illegible] important bearing upon the fiscal con[illegible] tion which exists in the country? [illegible] there are other channels through whi[illegible] Ireland has been financially wrecked. Some years ago the Church of Ireland was disestablished, and all the ecclesiastical and the lay officials and all those who had any claim upon the funds arising from Irish property were pensioned and received gratuities or allowances; they were allowed to commute, and many did. What happened? Those who commuted, and many of those who are drawing pensions to this day, are no longer living in Ireland, although Irish funds have to furnish the money to meet those pensions. All this furnishes a continuous stream—small compared with the stream of rent—flowing always to this country from Ireland. We have seen of late years a third stream in connection with the purchase of land. There are people who consider this a very good thing, but I am not concerned to discuss it now. But, looking at it from an economical point of view, what is the effect of the arrangement which has been entered into? The landlord sells his land, and he obtains from the Exchequer here in England the amount of the purchase money, or, at any rate, a large portion of it. He takes the money, but he does not remain in the place where his estate is. It may be that the landlord was an absentee before. He takes his money, but he does not invest it in Ireland, for he brings it over here. This establishes a charge upon those who remain in Ireland which will have to be met by a great drain for the next sixty years. Is that not an acknowledged fact which ought to be present in the mind of the Minister who is responsible for the fiscal arrangements of the country? Is it any wonder that Ireland is poor under such conditions? Is it any wonder that the English community should look with a certain amount of complacency upon this state of things, at any rate as far as their own interest is concerned, because what is drawn from Ireland is added to the

sources of England, and that which saves Ireland impoverished and anæmic comes to this country and fertilises and enriches England. In a human body if any part or limb is hurt nature draws upon the whole system, making a compensatory effort to relieve the part injured. But in this body concrete of the United Kingdom is there to be no relief for the suffering limb called Ireland? The Exchequer does not even leave the level of Irish resources as it was, but it makes a further drain on them to the extent of millions a year, rivalling the drain of rent itself. I will not trouble the House with the figures. They can be found in the Report of the Financial Relations Commission, and were furnished by the Treasury. They are figures eloquent of a state of things which is clearly unjust to a country like Ireland. I am bound to confess that I myself should not have placed at quite so high a figure as many of the Commissioners did the amount of the overdraft, but even if I made a reduction it would not be a very substantial reduction, and would not reduce the overdraft much below two and a half millions; and we know that at any rate in one year—1859-'60—it amounted to between five and six millions. I recollect when the last Home Rule Bill was introduced I had occasion to study with some care the figures relating to the then proposed Budget for Ireland. I went through all the papers—and they are very valuable and numerous—in the library of the House dealing with the financial relations between Ireland and England, year by year, throughout the century, and according to the most careful calculation I could make, I arrived at the conclusion that from the date of the Union down to the year 1890, there was drawn from Ireland into Great Britain in the shape of over-taxation an amount more than equal to the immense war indemnity paid by France to Germany after the Franco-German war—namely, 200 millions sterling. Hon. Members are inclined to imagine that there has been a large expenditure of English money in Ireland. There never was a greater delusion. Not one single penny of English money has ever been spent in Ireland. Grants may have been occasionally made, but they were mere thimblefuls taken from the stream of Irish money which first of all rolled in your direction. No English money has been spent in Ireland since the date of the Union. These drains supplement and complete a system of financial hæmorrhage which has brought Ireland to the economic condition in which we now find her. Is it any wonder that her industries are decreasing, that her quarries and other resources remain undeveloped, that her rivers roll their waters idly to the sea, and that her magnificent harbours are devoid of shipping? It is quite what is to be expected in a country where the cost of civil administration is 20s. per head of the population, whereas in Belgium it is only 15s. per head. I will not dwell—though the temptation is somewhat strong—on the many peculiarities and contrasts both with regard to taxation and expenditure between Ireland and this country: how, for instance, you put on whisky, one of the principal products of Ireland, a tax amounting to nearly 500 per cent. of the value of the article. But you do not treat English beer in the same way. Or turn again to the expenditure, and what a contrast we find. You waste the millions you take credit for spending in Ireland on the unproductive salaries of officials who are not wanted. In England you spend tens of millions—it is a matter of congratulation—in developing industry, in encouraging the mechanical arts, and in helping the productive classes. Is not that fact worthy of consideration at the hands of the Treasury? I am afraid I am detaining the House too long, but I cannot sit down without referring to a matter to which I heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer allude some little time ago. He told us that a complete answer—that was the meaning he conveyed—to the spokesmen of Ireland on this matter was contained in an interesting Return relating to revenue and expenditure in the three parts of the United Kingdom which had been issued, but he said that the Irish Members would not consent even to consider it. I take issue with the right hon. Gentleman. We are perfectly willing to consider it. I, at any rate, have considered it very carefully, and whatever store the right hon. Gentleman may set upon it, I am bound to say, without wishing to be at all discourteous, that the Return seems to me to be simply ridiculous. It is open to two fundamental objections. The first is that it is based on an assumption that a poor and backward country—backward in re-

spect of industries and economic resources—like Ireland is to be treated on the same lines and dealt with in the same manner as a country the population and wealth of which are increasing in a phenomenal manner. That, of course, is absurd. Further, it seems to me that this Return if properly looked at furnishes a complete refutation of the very proposition it was put forward to support. The Return is divided into three parts—the first part sets forth the revenue, the second the expenditure, and the third the contributions to Imperial services. The first part purports to show that Ireland contributes to the revenue £6·88 to every £80 contributed by England. The second part purports to show that in respect of expenditure Ireland receives £5·5 for every £27·96 spent in England. Happy Ireland—how generously she is treated! People would be naturally led to suppose that while Ireland pays £6·88 as against £80 paid by England, she receives in contributions £5·5, as against only £27·96 received by England. But what are the facts? This interesting Return, which never emanated from a man worthy of the name of a financier, and which is nothing better than the dislocated elaboration of a pedantic accountant, affects to show how the revenue raised by the three members of the United Kingdom is spent, so much in England, so much in Ireland, and so much in Scotland. But, Sir, the figures do not make up the full hundred. There is a large balance. Where is that spent? It is spent on "Imperial services," which is merely a euphemism for England. It is England under another name, and the money spent on "Imperial services" goes to English dockyards, to Woolwich Arensal, and a half-dozen other places in England, but not to Ireland. What was the object in bringing forward this Return? The original idea was to show that, although a certain amount of money was raised in Ireland, there was a large amount of revenue spent in Ireland which must be dealt with as a set-off. But if this doctrine of set-off applies to revenue spent in Ireland, it must apply equally to revenue expended in England. It is England that has the benefit of the expenditure on these Imperial services to which Ireland has to contribute. According to the last Returns a sum of £1,725,000 is drawn away from Ireland to this country. I do not know how any fairly candid mind can maintain that such a system is just to such a community as Ireland. I know that this is not an auspicious moment to bring forward this matter. We have heard lately resounding acclaim throughout this country in reference to the valour of the Irish soldiers in South Africa—[HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!]—a recognition of that which is quite true, which is quite refreshing. But I ask, what do these brave, honest soldiers at the Cape differ from their countrymen in Ireland? They are brave, of course, because they are Irishmen. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Yes,

> Fortes creantur fortibus: et bonis;
> Est in juvencis, est in equis patrum
> Virtus; nec imbellem feroces
> Progenerant aquilæ columbam.

They are brave, because they are Irishmen. Irishmen are not as Englishmen in war, either as soldiers or as generals. But are they altogether undistinguished? When you want to aid your soldiers and to obtain the most distinguished doctor, whom do you get but Sir William MacCormac? Or, take your own Civil Service in this country: the Accountant General of the Army, Sir R. Knox, is an Irishman; the Accountant General of the Navy, Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, is an Irishman; and your own officer of this House, the Comptroller and Auditor General, Sir Charles Ryan, is an Irishman. Then take your great men in Parliament: Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, and Burke, were all Irishmen. Were Cairns, your Lord Chancellor, or the present Lord Russell of Killowen, your Chief Justice, or your greatest diplomatist, Lord Dufferin, Englishmen? You pretend to think, because domestic troubles, or personal troubles of various kinds, or the pinch of hunger, has driven a certain number of recruits into your Army, that they are more than usually favourable specimens of Irishmen. Not at all. No, Sir; treat Irishmen fairly, and you will not have cause to complain. Give Ireland the same opportunity of industrial development as Belgium has had, and we will show the same Ireland advancing in the same road as Belgium. Then, but not till then, will the people of Ireland, to use the words of Mr. Cobbett—

> "Go forward to win those social triumphs which bring no sorrow in their train, and which if less dazzling, are more enduring than the most brilliant achievements and feats of arms."

, I beg to move the Resolution standing my name.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I have eat pleasure in seconding the motion oposed by my hon. friend. I wish to comiment my hon. friend on the tactics by hich he has secured this day for the scussion of his motion—tactics which e well understood, and which the right on. Gentleman the Leader of the House ill recognise as perfectly legitimate. In iscussing this motion we must bear in ind that we are instituting a comparison etween, perhaps, the richest country in he world and the poorest country in the orld, between a country with a teeming and an increasing population, with an enormous and ever-increasing trade, and Ireland, which, on the contrary, has a decreasing population and a languishing trade. If we wished, I think we could prove without much difficulty that that languishing trade is due to a great extent to British interference. I think we all bear in mind that Irish trade was killed by English navigation laws and differential duties. Looking at the condition of the two countries, the most astonishing fact is that, while you have in this great and prosperous country an increasing population, you have decreasing rates to pay—certainly a decreasing poor rate—whereas in Ireland you have a steadily decreasing population and the rates rising steadily. I may be told—I have heard it stated at meetings and elsewhere—that England to some extent recognises the claims of Ireland in this matter; and that the Act which was passed a couple of sessions ago for Local Government in Ireland removed a great part of our financial grievances. This point is to some extent of importance, and I wish to read a question and answer put in the House of Commons a few years ago.* The hon. Member for South Somerset asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant—

"Whether the Irish Local Government Bill gives greater relief to local taxation in Ireland than the English and Scotch Agricultural Rating Acts give in Great Britain; and, if so, what is the amount of greater relief, and how is it given?"

And the reply of the Chief Secretary was that—

"The agricultural grant proposed to be given to Ireland under the Bill is intended to correspond generally with the grant assigned to England under the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896. It would not be easy to give a more precise answer than this to the question of the hon. Member, because the circumstances of England and Ireland differ in some important particulars, and no absolute measure of comparison is possible."

Consequently, the assignment we have got in Ireland to the assistance of our rates has not removed one iota the grievances we complain of; the contrary is the case, because you do not give us in Ireland the assistance which you gave to England two or three years before that. We must acknowledge, therefore, that events have borne out that all the evils which the opponents of the Union foretold would follow the Union have followed it. They predicted that taxation would increase, that prosperity would diminish; whereas the advocates of the Union said that every good would come to Ireland, particularly financial good. It is a remarkable fact that, while the taxation of Ireland sixteen years before the Union was only one and a half millions, sixteen years after the Union it amounted to over four millions. Mr. Pitt said that we would save immensely by the Union, but events have falsified his prediction. The question of the over-taxation of Ireland is no doubt an elaborate one, requiring great thought and study, which few people are in a position to devote to it. The question was raised in the House of Commons in 1815, again in 1820, and on various subsequent occasions, but no redress has yet been given. It is very difficult for private Members to master all the details of this very complicated question, and that being so, we pressed upon the Government to appoint a Commission to investigate the matter. That Commission was appointed, and has reported, and no efforts have been made to throw discredit on its findings. Many people maintained that the Commission had to some extent a political complexion. Some of the gentlemen who sat upon it may have held strong political views, but the question was not political. No one who looks over the names can deny that it was an exceptionally strong Commission, and that amongst its members were men of high distinction. In fact, when it was first appointed many people in Ireland were not satisfied with it, because it was notorious that several gentlemen on it had earned distinction for themselves in

* See *The Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd March, 1898 [Fourth Series], Vol. liv., page 487.

the Treasury, and it was imagined that consequently their views would be to some extent biassed against Ireland and in favour of the Department with which they had been honourably connected. Nearly all the evidence placed before the Commission was official evidence from your own officials, and although Sir David Barbour differed in some respects from the other members, the Commission as a whole maintained, and I think they had good ground for maintaining, that from the evidence brought before them it was proved that Ireland was unable to pay more than a twentieth part of the expenditure of this country, although she paid an eleventh. Although that finding was brought in some years ago, nothing whatever has been done to carry it out, and therefore that provides us with a great grievance. You appointed your own Commission, you established your own tribunal, you placed before it the evidence of your own officials, and although two or three gentlemen composing that Commission had some prejudice against the Irish cause, you now, forsooth, finding the verdict of your own jury against you, come whining to this House and to the country and complain of the jury you yourselves appointed. It does not surprise us in Ireland very much, for we are used to that sort of thing. I believe that your action here, as in many other respects, has been in keeping with your previous conduct, and that it is unjust, illegal, and unspeakably mean. What would have been the case if the findings had been the other way, and the Commissioners had found that Ireland had not paid a proper proportion of the taxation, and we had raised a protest against it? Why, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would have said, "That is Ireland all over. The jury have brought in a verdict against her, and now she finds fault with the decision." It is you who find fault with the decision of your own Commission. The Commission has reported now some years, and every day our condition becomes worse and our debt becomes greater and our poverty becomes more crushing. It is only three years ago that the Chief Secretary had to introduce a large measure of public works in Ireland, so great was the poverty, and although the lowest wage given on those works was 3s. and the highest only 6s. a week, he was able to obtain an enormous number of able-bodied men to work for such pitiful wages, and who were willing to walk many miles a day to and from their work, and if that is not a test of poverty I do not know what is. The large amount of expenditure involved by the conduct of a war which we consider to be unjust falls very heavily upon us, and will increase very largely the burden we have to bear. I am not particularly sanguine of any good arising from this debate, and my experience of public life is that Ireland can obtain no redress in this House of any kind, unless there is a very vigorous agitation in Ireland at the same time. At the same time, this discussion may impress upon our people the necessity of organisation, and doing something to bring pressure upon this House. The lesson is burnt in on the minds of the Irish people that, no matter how just their claims may be, so long as they remain quiet nothing will be done to alleviate their sufferings. Those Mr. Speaker, are my views, and in conclusion I beg to second the motion of my hon. friend the Member for East Donegal.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That in the economic circumstances of Ireland the disproportion between the taxation of Ireland and its taxable capacity, disclosed by the findings of the Royal Commission, demands the serious attention of the Government, with a view to a remedy." -(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

*MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick): The hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced this motion, and who spoke in a very different tone to that of the hon. Gentleman who seconded his motion, called upon us to deal fairly with Ireland, and in his peroration used an argument which will go home to us. He said in view of the action of Irish soldiers at the front, and the way that that action has brought us together we ought to be ready to deal with Ireland fairly and justly. I certainly think we should be ready to deal not only fairly but also with liberality to Ireland in every way. The hon. and learned Gentleman called upon us to use the resources of the country to develop the industries of Ireland. He pointed out that the funds paid in Ireland were used for the payment of unnecessary salaries, and that the

funds spent in this country were used to develop the industrial undertakings of the country. I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman is quite right in his facts. I think a great deal of money has been spent lately in developing the resources of Ireland, though, no doubt, more ought to be done in that way. But I do ask the hon. and learned Gentleman and other Irish Members how far they have assisted any Government which has endeavoured to reduce useless salaries for the purpose of using the money in a more beneficial manner.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): We did indeed, the very moment we got the promise to spend the money in other ways, and I myself moved to reduce the salaries of some of the judges.

MR. PARKER SMITH: The hon. and learned Gentleman also said that no English money had been spent in Ireland since the date of the Union. I think there that he is entirely mistaken, and that he is going back on an old historical fallacy in connection with which I shall say a few words. I do not think this is a real grievance—this financial grievance which is now being made use of in Ireland. It appears to me to be an arithmetical grievance which could easily be reduced to absurdity by an arithmetical reply. So far as the £2,000,000 of over-taxation is concerned, that could be met by removing the income tax and the death duties from Ireland, which would undoubtedly remove the grievance, but would not have the effect desired by hon. Members opposite. At the same time I believe Ireland deserves assistance in order that her people may be able to enjoy the prosperity that the years since the Union have brought to Great Britain. Irish Home Rulers have put a construction upon the Act of Union with which I do not agree. They insist upon that technicality with a vigour that surprises me when I remember the storm which arose a few years ago when someone not in this House suggested that it was necessary to convince the predominant partner before anything could be done in regard to the alteration of the Act of Union. What was the position of Mr. Pitt when dealing with the Union? He expressed himself very clearly in his great speech of the 31st of January, 1799. He said—

"What I should hope would be found practicable is that the system of internal taxation in each country might gradually be so equalised and assimilated on the leading articles as to make all rules of specific proportion unnecessary, and to secure that Ireland shall never be taxed but in proportion as we tax ourselves."

And Lord Castlereagh's view was equally distinct. He said†—

"It were to be wished that there was not an unsurmountable bar to a common system, and a common treasury, and that we might become like countries of the same kingdom, subject to the same system of finances. Were our entire expenditure common (which would happen if neither country had any separate debts, or if their debts were in proportion to their ability) by no system whatever could they be made to contribute so strictly according to their means as by being subject to the same taxes equally bearing upon the great objects of taxation in both countries. Such, however, is the disproportion of debts of the two kingdoms to each other at the present that a common system for the present is impossible."

On those principles was the Act of Union introduced. The proportion of the payments of each country was fixed by the Act of Union for twenty years, and it was then to be renewed at intervals—

"Unless previous to any such period the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall have declared that the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the like articles in both countries."

The whole object of the Act of Union and the whole declaration of the framers of that Act was indiscriminate expenditure and indiscriminate taxation. The only obstacle to an immediate junction was the debt of each country, and in regard to that the provision of Article 7 was as follows—I am reading the essential words and leaving out all the redundant verbiage with which Acts at that date were clothed—

"If at any future day the value of the respective debts of each country shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country, it shall be competent for the Parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted

* See *The Parliamentary History*, Vol. xxxiv., page 289.

†Speech of Lord Castlereagh in the Irish House of Commons, February 5th, 1800. (Quoted in First Appendix to Report of Royal Commission on Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland (1895), page 326.)

previously to such declaration shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand."

Ireland and Scotland were placed in this matter on exactly the same footing, not of keeping up the proportion, but of receiving the consideration from the richer portion of the country. At the time of the Act of Union, Scotland was smaller and poorer than Ireland, and it has only got richer since that time mainly owing to the discovery of iron and coal, which has not yet been discovered in Ireland in any quantity. That the proportion fixed by statute at the time of the Union was excessive has been admitted by statesmen for a large number of years. Two to fifteen was more than Ireland could afford, but that was not known at the time. That ratio was fixed on a peace basis, but the war came on and enormously increased the expenditure, and the proportion of two to fifteen became impossible. Grattan said in relation to this—

"The truth is, the necessary and inevitable expenses of the war were beyond all possibility of calculation or foresight, and Ireland was not able to follow you."*

Of course it is a mere conjecture what Ireland would have done if there had been no Union, but in Great Britain a supreme effort was made and the revenue was more than trebled. The people of Ireland felt themselves at that time concerned over the struggle and they would have assisted as they had done before the Union. The strain of the war and the endeavour to contribute what they could was too great and nearly involved bankruptcy. That could only be done by borrowing at an enormous rate. The revenue of Ireland during the year following the Union was only half the expenditure and the debt increased enormously. The Irish Debt in 1800 was only £32,000,000 and by 1816 it had increased to £112,500,000. Having reached that point and the bankruptcy of Ireland being imminent, the British Exchequer took over both the pre-Union debt and the debt incurred subsequent to the Act of Union. This put Ireland into the same position as that which she would have occupied if the ratio at the time of the Union had been taken at one to fifteen instead of two to fifteen, and Ireland had continued to pay that. If the share of one to fifteen had been fixed by the Union it is obvious from the observations of Pitt that the Treasuries would have been united at the time of the Union. It is admitted that the mode of dealing with Ireland adopted in 1817 was the most favourable that could be formed for Ireland, and that was the opinion of Mr. Chisholm in 1869, and it is hardly necessary to quote Mr. Plunket, who was one of the opponents of the passing of the Act of Union, and who said in 1822*—

"I had been afraid that the interests of Ireland on the abolition of her separate constitution would come to be discussed in a hostile Parliament. But I can now state, and I wish when I speak I could be heard by the whole of Ireland, that during the time I have sat in the united Parliament, I have found every question that related to the interests or security of that country entertained with indulgence and treated with the most deliberate regard."

In the Union Debate an amendment was moved in the Irish House of Commons to the effect that the proportion should be two-twentieths. Supposing that had been so, the Irish debt would have increased almost as rapidly, and the same result would have come about, and at the same time suppose the ratio had been fixed at 1 to 18, as the Irish peers (according to Mr. Sexton) desired. Then there would have been a joint Treasury from the first. How does the matter stand? The Act of Union looked to temporary fiscal separation but permanent union—

"All future expense, together with the charges of all joint debts, shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes on the same articles subject only to exemptions."

That is the principle laid down by British statesmen at the Union, and carried into effect in 1817 without objection, and what has happened to change that position? The old proposition is gone altogether, and if you go back, which is impossible, you go back on new ground, and must discriminate in the expenditure as well as revenue charges. If taken thus the contribution of Ireland to Imperial services, or to expenditure beyond her own

* 21st April, 1818; from Grattan's Speeches 1822 Edition, Vol. iv., page 411. See also *The Parliamentary Debates* [First Series], Vol. xxxviii., page 260.

Mr. Parker Smith.

*April 22nd, 1822. See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Second Series], Vol. vi., page 1548.

bounds, is insignificant, and the result would be that Ireland would be found to be entitled to nothing further. But there are the Home Rule Bills of 1886 and 1892, and those who adhere to them are no doubt pledged to a different opinion. When the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Resolution speaks of the Financial Relations Commission as our jury it is nothing of the kind. The hon. Gentlemen opposite who appointed the Commission are to blame, and we are not to be bound by the findings of the Commission. But they very carefully guard themselves, so that any gentleman who signed the Report can say, "I was limited by my reference." [An HON. MEMBER: I would ask the hon. Member if those who appointed the Commission were Englishmen.] Those who appointed the Commission were Mr. Gladstone's Government of the day, but, as the general election which took place not long afterwards proved, they did not represent the opinions of Englishmen. How far are we bound to this principle? We are not bound at all. We neither accepted the jury nor the terms of reference, which we consider misleading. The only ground alleged for tying us down to this principle is Mr. Goschen's Committee of 1890. Too much is built upon that. What happened was that there were very large local grants to England, and naturally you had to arrive at some idea—seeing that you had to spend the money on a different class of objects — as to what equivalent you should give to other countries. But it was not intended in any way to deal with the matter as hon. Members from Ireland suggest. That specific point was raised by Mr. Sexton, who then took a leading part in the discussion of finance in these debates. Mr. Sexton suggested an Amendment* that it should have a retrospective effect, but Mr. Goschen said it should purely deal with questions of the present and the future. The object was to see what relief or what advantage should be given to Scotland or Ireland corresponding to what was being done in England. The pledge given was that there should be equal taxes on the same articles, subject only to such exemption as circumstances might from time to time demand. That was the pledge we gave in 1817, and that is the pledge we acknowledge now. I am not concerned to argue that all through the century Ireland has always received all the financial assistance which we think she ought to have had. There is no doubt that the taxation of the middle of the century pressed upon Ireland. Free Trade did her comparatively little good, and the great financial reforms of Mr. Gladstone made themselves felt in Ireland in a way he did not anticipate. Mr. Gladstone thought he was relieving Ireland of something like an equivalent of the taxation imposed on her, and had the intention of doing what was fair and just to Ireland, although he put upon Irishmen by his financial reforms more than he intended. But he argued most strongly that taxation was to be regarded as a personal matter altogether, and not to be treated on geographical principles. That is the position taken up by all statesmen. It was taken up by the Committee of 1864 and by Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Lowe in 1875. That being so, I feel that the historical financial grievance has no basis, and that it is a mistake for hon. Members to come forward with a claim to a debt swollen to an enormous amount. Hon. Members complain of our ignorance. For my part I think there are mistaken directions in which we spend money in Ireland. I wish they would come to help us, as they have on some occasions done. I wish they would explain where the expenditure is useless, and that they would advise us with some sense of responsibility in the matter. I admit that when they have done that they have not always received full encouragement. When a Bill was introduced by the hon. Member for Louth with respect to the utilisation of water power I felt that was exactly the sort of measure which we should have done our best to encourage. I always felt regret at the premature failure of that Bill. On the other hand, the Government have not received the help they are entitled to in their desire to cut down useless expenditure. A deputation with regard to transport waited upon the Board of Agriculture, amongst the members being men of all parties. It included the Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, who has worked much on questions of this kind, and is much interested in Irish railways. There is a

*See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cccxlviii., page 926.

vast deal to be said for making the Irish railways State railways. The problem is a totally different one from the one that exists in England. It is more like the problem that exists in Hungary, or in India, and it is well worth considering whether anything can be done to make an enormous saving to the producer in Ireland, with the assistance and capital of the British Government. There is one thing perfectly obvious in regard to a question of this sort. The Irish Members can certainly make it impossible if they do not choose to assist. There are many other schemes that this Parliament is fully prepared to consider if the Irish Members will give us the help of their local knowledge. We are not committed to any class in Ireland, but we want to see fairness and justice to all classes, and we want to develop the resources of the country in every way we can. But as long as we have the suspicion in our minds that the Irish Members, while desiring to gain an advantage for friends also wish to damage opponents, it is difficult to support them. The hon. Member opposite has said that this is a critical time. We hear of the horrors of war. Long after these are forgotten, deeper effects will come from this war. We have been brought closer together, and we have worked more with one another under the pressure of this war, than in the comfortable times of peace. An enormous difference has been brought about in our relations with the colonies, and far-reaching constitutional changes in the government of the Empire may follow. Is Ireland the only place where this is to have no effect at all? Are we to stop at cheering the Irish soldiers or wearing the shamrock? I hope the closeness of our feeling will not be forgotten. It has had one effect in this House. During past weeks we have listened with much patience to language from hon. Members opposite which we should have found it hard to tolerate. It makes us desire to show our brotherhood more practically and more prominently. If hon. Gentlemen who represent Ireland come to us with stories of ancient untold millions, and claim payment of a debt, we say No. If they ask for political changes which we believe would be ruinous to the Empire at large we can only say, as we have said before, No. If they come to us and ask us to assist in remedying the troubles of Ireland, which they attribute to the Brit Government, but are, I think, in th order of nature and beyond the con of the Government, they will find fr the Members on this side of the Ho neither an unfriendly nor an unwill answer.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): We ask i justice, we ask for our own in matters of finance, and we ask you to stand by th pledges of your forefathers as embodied i the Act of Union. The hon. Member for Partick, who has emerged out of the quietude shown since his opposition to the Home Rule Bill, gives a lec of advice how the Irish Members ought to conduct the Irish case and how we ought to behave. We do not desire or require the hon. Member's advice, we certainly shall not take his instructions, and above all we strenuously disavow his very paltry patronage. The question is not what the hon. Member for Partick thinks with regard to Free Trade. He admits himself that although Free Trade has been of enormous advantage to Great Britain generally, it has been economically a great disadvantage to Ireland. That is a portion of our case. By the system of taxation, no doubt wisely devised for the benefit of Great Britain—the system by which taxation on a large number of articles has been changed, and taxation placed on a few articles—Ireland as a purely agricultural country is at a disadvantage as compared with Great Britain. It is an economical problem that need only be stated to be understood. A Royal Commission was appointed a few years ago to inquire into this question, and, speaking with all respect, I contend that no declaration from the front bench, or from any Chancellor of the Exchequer or financier yet discovered, can overthrow or overturn the finding of that Royal Commission until you have something to substitute for it. It will be said that the Royal Commission was the creation of a Home Rule Government. Well, granted; but it was entitled to all the more authority for this reason, it was not a committee of politicians. It was a Royal Commission consisting mainly of experts. I do not now speak from a Home Rule or Nationalist point of view. It was a Commission appointed to inquire into the bookkeeping and accounts between the predominant partner and Ireland, and until you have some-

ing in its place of equal or superior thority you are bound to respect their dings. But it is not true to say that is inquiry was initiated by a Home ule Government. It was the present irst Lord of the Admiralty, then Chanllor of the Exchequer, who in 1890 ppointed a Committee. The Committee as appointed to inquire into the quity of the financial relations beween England, Scotland, and Ireland. f the contention of the Government e true that indiscriminate taxation an press with no injustice on any of these ountries, why, in the name of Heaven, was this Commission ever suggested? This Royal Commission was a more competent and a more impartial tribunal than perhaps the Committee the First Lord of the Admiralty proposed. It was not composed of political partisans. Their conclusions were not arrived at in a hasty manner. They sat for many months taking evidence from acknowledged Treasury experts, including such men as Sir Robert Giffen, Sir Robert Hamilton, and men, generally speaking, far above the ordinary commonplace individual. The men who gave evidence were men who had been authorities in economic science, and for the hon. Member to get up and controvert evidence of that kind is a species of audacity which is only possible in the House of Commons. What were the findings? First of all, that Ireland must, for the purposes of the inquiry, be considered a separate entity. I consider it a species of Parliamentary audacity for anyone to say that it is not a separate entity. It was proved to the hilt that the basis of taxation was entirely a miscalculation as regards the resources of Ireland, and that the increase of taxation since 1853 was not justified by the then existing circumstances. It was proved distinctly and beyond controversy that when, in 1853, Mr. Gladstone imposed the income tax, he imposed it for a limited time. The income tax has continued ever since in Ireland—not that I think the income tax more unjust in Ireland than in England or Scotland, because I think the rich should be made to pay their share of taxation in each of the three countries, but it is a tax which presses most heavily upon Ireland. That grievance has been emphasised and accentuated by this year's Budget. I think, with all respect, this lies at the root of the whole controversy—that identity in the rate of taxation does not involve equality of burden. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that England conquered France or that France conquered England, and suppose that the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to impose a duty on coffee. Well, that might be supposed to be an equal burden; but obviously on the Frenchman it would be a heavier burden, because in France coffee is more generally used. If a French Chancellor of the Exchequer were to levy a duty on tea, in England it would be an unequal burden, for that duty would press much more heavily on the English household than upon the French, tea being more consumed in this country. That illustrates the fallacy that underlies the statement that Ireland is not overburdened because taxation is the same on the individual as in England and Scotland. Overlooking the historical argument altogether, we are entitled to allege that you free a large number of commodities from taxation, and that you put indirect taxes on a few, and these few commodities are those which are most generally consumed in Ireland—tea, tobacco, and spirits. Of course, ordinary temperance reformers say it is a good thing to have a heavy duty on spirits. They say it has a tendency to encourage temperance. You have steadily raised the tax on whisky, and you are this year raising it by another 6d. per gallon. Why do you do it? To draw from the country where the whisky is consumed so much extra money. The same with tea and tobacco, but to a more limited extent. It must be obvious to the meanest intelligence that you are imposing this taxation on the working classes. It is all very well to say that if they did not drink whisky or smoke tobacco they would not have to pay the tax. True, but that is not the basis of finance. The whole question turns upon the seventh Article of the Act of Union. No matter from what point of view you approach the matter, you are face to face with the fact that if an ordinary legislative Union was intended between Great Britain and Ireland, and there was no thought of a financial settlement, there would have been no necessity for that seventh Article. If the Parliament of Ireland was merely to be abolished and the two legislatures brought together, that Article would have been unnecessary. But financial considerations were present to the minds of

those who contrived, and, as far as Ireland is concerned, brought about that Union, and therefore that Article becomes of enormous importance. It cannot be, and, in fairness, it ought not to be, forgotten that this was not the absorption of one legislature by another. It was a fair treaty and contract between two legislatures, and being a treaty it should be observed—that is, if at this hour of the day there remains in the average English mind any respect for treaties and contracts. That treaty was referred to by Lord Castlereagh in terms something to this effect—

"By there being a provision for revision Ireland has the utmost possible security that she cannot be taxed beyond the measure of her comparative ability, and that the ratio of her contribution must ever correspond with her relative wealth and prosperity."

I contend that those words must mean either something serious or nothing at all. According to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and those who support him they mean nothing, and they need not have been inserted in the Act of Union or put into the Treaty. I contend that that seventh Article proves beyond all controversy the existence of two separate entities, and that is the basis on which this motion is made. I will not weary the House with many figures; I will only point out that the relative taxable capacity in 1800 was put at the proportion of two to fifteen; but it must be remembered that the population of Great Britain at that time was little more than double that of Ireland, while now it is nearly eight times as great. Surely, when you have a country with an enormously diminishing population and dwindling resources tied to a country with an enormously increasing population and growing resources, you are bound to consider the claim for separate treatment and for the exemptions and abatements provided for in the Act of Union. This House, the Government, and the country have power to repudiate the Act of Union; they have power as the predominant partner to tear it in pieces. But is it honourable so to do? Time after time I have heard this doctrine of indiscriminate taxation raised by Chancellors of the Exchequer, but I have never yet heard a single argument to controvert the findings of the Royal Commission. It is not fair controversy or political discussion to say that that Commission was appointed by a Home Rule Government. All Governments, whether called Unionist, Tory, or Liberal, are alike to us. That Commission of incomparable experts, after hearing the evidence of men who had been trained in finance from their youth, has given its verdict, and it is not creditable that its findings should be repudiated. Therefore, I say that Parliament ought to accept this motion in accordance with the findings of that Commission.

*Mr. PURVIS (Peterborough): There are two ways of dealing with this subject which are very common, but which I do not well see can rightly inform our minds in coming to a conclusion on the motion now before the House. One way enters into elaborate and complicated, ingenious and conjectural elements of the question in which the understanding is soon smothered by the weed and tangle of detail, and we cannot see the wood for the trees. The other way of talking, that one of the taxable capacity of the separate entity, is a kind of pedantry, if I may say so, in which the arguments follow each other all duly in a row, each holding on by the skirts of the other, but have their beginning in an exploded fiscal system, and having too little to do with the actual features of the case for us to judge by in making up our minds. This last error I shall certainly avoid, and for the other I will do what I can not to get entangled in the labyrinth of complicated detail. On the threshold there is this notable circumstance. The facts and figures of the Royal Commission may be, and I daresay are generally accepted without reserve by those like myself in search of light and leading; but it is otherwise with the Commissioners' deductions and inferences from these facts and figures. And this because by some fault or misfortune the Reports wear on the face of them a partisan look. Naturally enough, not a single Home Ruler was able to report that Ireland had no financial grievance; but, on the other hand, I know not how, not a single Unionist who was not also an Irishman was able to report that Ireland had any financial grievance. But from their facts and figures which, so far as I am aware, we do accept, this much we know and must allow, that the financial arrangement under the Act of Union turned out to be an unfair arrangement to Ireland. Time showed that the

proportion of two to fifteen fixed on Ireland by the seventh Article of the Act of Union on the unhappy separate entity system was an unfair burden on Ireland from 1800 to 1817. Still, when all was said and done, she did not in point of fact pay two to fifteen, but only two to twenty-four. The unpaid balance was added to the then existing separate debt of Ireland on the same mistaken separate entity system, and in 1817 that debt was amalgamated with the debt of Great Britain—merged in the general debt of the United Kingdom, and so in the end the taxpayers of the whole United Kingdom had to bear the burden. Thus in the year 1817 the knell of the separate entity system of national taxable capacity was sounded and was succeeded by the present system of individual personal liability. The system which thus was doomed in 1817 had been moribund even in 1800, for that same seventh Article of the Act of Union in fixing the proportion of two to fifteen expressly contemplated that at a future date the whole United Kingdom should contribute "by equal taxes on the same articles in each." The national capacity separate entity system was then being found unworkable owing to the movements of duty-paid goods between the two kingdoms. The tobacco duty collected in England was paid partly in Ireland by the Irishman who smoked part of the tobacco; and the duty on Irish whisky levied in Ireland was partly paid in England by the Englishman who drank part of the whisky. The changing shares between the two countries, as separate national entities, could not be defined any more than the changing colours on a pigeon's neck. It is true that the Act of Union, in referring to future equality of taxation, qualified this. It stipulated that such equality was to be subject to "such exemptions and abatements in Ireland and Scotland as circumstances might demand," and accordingly at this day Ireland is exempt from certain duties and taxes such as house duty, railway duty, and dog tax. Yet for all that, after the debt of the two countries had been consolidated in 1817, and supply to the various services amalgamated, step by step such taxes as were levied in both countries were assimilated until in 1859 the process was complete, and now for more than a generation Great Britain and Ireland have been treated alike in rate of taxation laid on individuals or on commodities in both countries. The motion before the House seeks to disarrange this equality, and it is said that in the process I have just described, while taxes have been taken off England, Ireland has had taxes laid upon her; but this is one of those literal truths which are untruths in substance. Down to 1859 Great Britain bore more taxes than did Ireland, and bore higher rates than did Ireland of taxes which were common to both. It was meet, therefore, that some should be taken off in Great Britain and others put on or increased in Ireland. And this being under the new system according to the taxable capacity of individuals was a measure of the growing prosperity of Irishmen such as it was—not a mark of the oppression of their country at large. As far as the whole sister country is concerned as distinguished from individuals, Ireland has become the lesser partner in a greater business, and if her expenses are more, still more are her profits. She is not worse off, but better off. It is true that Great Britain has profited still more than Ireland by reason of the Union. Ireland lags behind England. The Irish are poor as a people—the more is the pity—and all poor people pay more in taxation out of every pound of their income than do rich people, because the poor consume more dutiable articles in proportion to their income than do the rich. For instance, a rich man does not drink more tea in proportion to his income, even with his servants into the bargain. I allow all this in favour of Ireland's plea of poverty, but it is no reason for putting the clock back in general fiscal policy. It may be and is a good reason for wise liberality on the part of the Government for helping profitable objects and undertakings in Ireland. It is no reason for Ireland to say to Great Britain, "Stand and deliver." As in the case of Home Rule she was crying for the moon, so here she is quarrelling with her bread and butter.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): As an Irish Member I feel bound to state to the House the grounds upon which I think this motion should be carried. I listened with great interest to the speeches of the hon. Member for Partick, and the last speaker, but both appeared to me to lose sight altogether of the real question involved in this important

mation. I concede at once that if you were to treat everyone living in Ireland in the same way as you would if they were living in Yorkshire or Somersetshire, it would be impossible to differentiate between the taxation each individual would have to bear. But that is not the question at present under discussion. We could never leave out of sight the fact that the connection between England and Ireland was the result of a solemn act of treaty—a treaty entered into by two countries wholly independent of each other at the time. The English Members of this House must recollect that Ireland up to the time of the Union had a separate Legislature and was wholly independent of England except that she was ruled by the same Sovereign; and that the two countries met at arm's length. I am not going into the history of the unfortunate Act of Union; I am not going to weary the House with a recapitulation of the fraud and corruption by which the people were defrauded of their birthright. I am assuming that it was a contract entered into deliberately, and binding so far as it went. The very form of the Act shows that it was a treaty between two Powers. To prevent any misconception, I have here the Act of Parliament itself. It is not in the ordinary shape of an Act of Parliament: it is a treaty a treaty divided into certain articles like any other convention—like the Convention of 1884, or those Conventions which are so often entered into, and, alas, so frequently broken. That treaty was confirmed by an Act not only of the Irish Parliament, but of the British Parliament also. That is the Act which I have here before me. Under the Seventh article it is expressly provided that there should be a difference made in taxation for the two countries for a certain time, at all events; and it was based upon the principle that the taxable capacity of Ireland was as two parts out of seventeen, the taxable capacity of England being fifteen parts. That was the basis of the whole thing, and that was the origin of the evil which the Irish Members are now protesting against, and to which we may trace the misery and degradation and poverty of that portion of the United Kingdom as compared with her great and flourishing sister, England. That proportion of two to fifteen was altogether wrong. Distinguished Members speaking in the Irish House of Commons all long told that that was an undue proportion and that the result would be to involve Ireland in debt. The protest of the House of Lords, headed by the Duke of Leinster of the day, put on record the opinion that the proportion should be one to eighteen, and, by a strange gift of prophecy, it was predicted that the effect of that miscalculation would be to leave Ireland in a short time involved in debt and overtaxed to the extent of £2,500,000 or £2,750,000—the very result arrived at by the Royal Commission appointed by this House three or four years ago. That was the foundation of our trouble. What happened? It was provided by this Article that the only separate charge—I am speaking now of charges upon Ireland—should be the interest on the then existing Debt of the two countries respectively. What was the Debt of Ireland at the time of the Union? £28,000,000. From 1782 to about 1794 she had carried on her affairs prosperously, almost without any debt. She was only obliged to contribute 15,000 men to the Imperial force. She managed her own affairs; she imposed her own taxes; she levied her own dues. It was in the last two or three years before the Union, during the time of the Rebellion, when Ireland was flooded with troops from this country, that even that small debt of £28,000,000 was incurred. At that time the Debt of Great Britain, I believe, was £446,000,000. There was the Irish House of Commons consisting of 300 gentlemen, who were supposed to represent the constituency of Ireland, and they were entering into a treaty on behalf of a country with a separate debt of £28,000,000, while the debt of Great Britain was £446,000,000. What right would the Irish House of Commons have to do otherwise than what they did? They were surrendering the sole right to tax the Irish, giving up about 200 representatives. They assumed that the proportion was correct, but they were deceived and imposed upon by the statesmen of that day. They were deceived by Mr. Pitt and by Lord Castlereagh. Perhaps those statesmen acted in ignorance, but they placed themselves in the hands of interested experts, they took their advice, and they put the proportion at 1 to 7½. The Act of Union provided that all Ireland would have to pay would be the charge on the separate debt of £28,000,000, and it fixed her contribution

Serjeant Hemphill.

t two parts out of seventeen. The country was hardly tried, and Ireland began to feel very soon afterwards that she was overtaxed, and that it was impossible to keep pace with her partner. After the Act of Union England embarked in war, sending her legions to every part of the world. Poor Ireland—a poor relation in every sense—followed in her train, and was obliged to contribute in that tremendous disproportion of two parts out of seventeen, the consequence being that in a few years Ireland's debt was swelled from £28,000,000 to something like £116,000,000 or thereabouts. From the very first Ireland was overtaxed, and she was put in such a position that she could not get out of her toils. The Earl of Liverpool and other statesmen fastened upon a particular stipulation in the Articles of Union, and said, "Now that the Irish debt has come to the same proportion as the English debt we may consolidate the revenue," and that is what the Act of 1816 does. It consolidated the Exchequer of the two countries; it did not alter the taxation, but carried out what was provided for by the Seventh Article of the Act of Union and retroacted on that Act. As a matter of fact the taxation was not equalised by that Act, and it never contemplated that the taxation should necessarily be equalised. The taxation was not equalised for many years after, and up to the year 1858 the taxes were still different. It is a fallacy, therefore, to rely on this Act of 1816 as warranting and justifying the mischief that ensued to Ireland. I am not going to trouble the House with many figures, but there are one or two which are so striking as to the effect of this Act that I feel I must call attention to them. Now let us see how this Act operated on the unfortunate people of Ireland. The average income of the people of Great Britain is about £40 a year per head of the population; but at the very highest the average income of the people of Ireland is only about £12 a year. Where is the justice of saying that a man who has £12 a year to subsist upon should pay the same taxes as a man who has £40 a year? Those figures are unquestionable, and year after year the effect of this arrangement was to raise the taxation per head upon the people of Ireland, and at the time of the Union the taxation in England was about £3 per head, and in Ireland it was about 10s. or 11s. At the period when the Royal Commission made their Report the taxation of Ireland had risen to £1 5s. 11d. as against £2 5s. 4d. in England. The effect of this unfortunate arrangement was to submerge Ireland in debt. I am now speaking of the position of things as resulting from the Act of Union. The result was to keep Ireland with a millstone round her neck, and she was just like an individual who begins life with a small debt, whose income never overtakes his indebtedness, and he struggles on until he ends in bankruptcy. Ireland shared the fate of all bankrupts, and the lot of every unfortunate person who has to struggle with adversity. The population of Ireland in the year 1800 was 5,000,000, and the population of England was 10,000,000. Things went on for some years after the Act of 1816, and even then the taxation was not equal. The Corn Laws had not been repealed, and the industries of Ireland throve to a certain extent, and throughout every part of the country there were corn mills, distilleries, and other means of industry. Then came the repeal of the Corn Laws, which, while it enhanced the prosperity of England, operated to an unparalleled degree against the prosperity of Ireland, and operated injuriously from a financial point of view. Although I admit that the repeal of the Corn Laws was necessary, their repeal was most unfortunate and most ill-timed in Ireland, though I admit it was necessary that after the famine something should be done to prevent the people actually dying, as many of them did, from starvation. What has been the practical effect of the system of taxation maintained by this country? The population of England is now 35,000,000, while the population of Ireland is only about 4,500,000. The population of Ireland has fallen off by nearly one-half since the year 1850 or 1846; but the population of England during that period has more than trebled, very nearly quadrupled itself. Surely there must be something rotten in a system which leads to such a result. Where does the burden of this war Budget press? Not upon the professional class, or upon those with fixed incomes, but it presses upon the very poor. My sympathy is with the man who, when he gets up in the morning, hardly knows how he can provide the daily meal for himself and

his family. My sympathy is with the struggling labourer in every department of work, and I do not complain of the imposition of the income tax, which was imposed for the first time in 1853 as a temporary measure upon Ireland by Mr. Gladstone. I do not complain of that, because it may be said that £700 or £800 income in Ireland ought to be as good as £700 or £800 income in England. What I complain of is that the man who has to support himself and his family on a miserable pittance—and who has to do it on a sum four times less than that of his English brother—should have to pay for the necessaries of life the same amount of taxation. When Mr. Gladstone imposed the income tax and raised the duty on spirits he expected that it would only continue for seven years. He admitted himself that he was doing an injustice to Ireland for which he afterwards made ample reparation in his legislation and attempts at legislation. He felt that because as a compensation he gave up £4,000,000 of terminable annuities as an equivalent for the imposition of the income tax in 1853 those annuities which had been created as an Irish debt because of advances made for relief works during the time of the famine. Why should this system be still continued? Why in the present Budget should this wrong be perpetuated? I can tell the House from experience in every part of Ireland from the north to the south that tea is an absolute necessary of life not only with the better classes but with the poor struggling artisans, labourers, and peasants all over the country. Tea in every poor home is the main support, and the imposition of 2d. a pound on tea is a serious and formidable matter for these poor people to deal with. It suits some persons to allege in different places that Ireland is now prosperous and that she is not poorer than other parts of the country. But those who know Ireland must feel what a mockery and delusion it is to allege any such thing. Let any hon. Member traverse some of the outlying parts of England and also the outlying parts of Ireland, and then I am sure he will honestly and fairly admit that in Ireland the mode of life is far lower among the poor than among the poor in England. Why then should they be taxed on the same basis? I am not a smoker myself except in the very smallest degree, and therefore I can speak disinterestedly; but by putting an extra tax upon tobacco the poor fellow who has to go for hours without a meal will suffer a very serious loss. The labourer in the field and the peasant in the barn would rather go without their allowance of about a pound of Indian meal a day than go without their pipe of tobacco. But why place a tax on tobacco, and why not select some other article? Whisky is one of the principal manufactures of Ireland, but it must not be imagined from that statement that Ireland is more drunken than England, for that is quite a mistake. The figures in the Report of this Commission show that there is less whisky drunk per head of the population by the Irish than is drunk by the English or the Scotch. It is a popular fallacy to say that the Irish are the greatest whisky drinkers. They do occasionally "indulge" at fairs and markets and get a little excited either from the ardour of their nature or from the emptiness of their stomachs, but that is the greatest crime that can be alleged against them. But a top dressing of whisky on an empty stomach is very apt to reach the head. At one time whisky used to be one of the main products of Ireland. But now I could mention distillery after distillery which have had to be closed.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Thank goodness!

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL: The hon. Member says "thank goodness," and he is a temperance advocate. I do not yield to him in my admiration of temperance, but it is a mistake to suppose that the shutting up of those distilleries and the consequent throwing of a number of people out of employment in any way discourages intemperance, for it has no such effect. The intemperance increases afterwards, and the only difference is that instead of getting sound wholesome spirits they often get adulterated spirits mixed with sulphuric acid which is sold in some of the shebeens and inferior public-houses, and this drives those who consume it in moments of weakness and temptation to madness and desperation. But this is no argument for imposing this extra taxation on Ireland. The effect of imposing too high a tax on spirits is to lead to adulteration, which aggravates the evil of intemperance. It may not be possible

to have a different system of taxation for Ireland and England, but it is possible to take into consideration the taxable capacity of the two countries. Some authorities have measured this capacity as one to twenty, but I think one to twenty-three is nearer the mark, and some authorities have put it at one to thirty. At the present moment Ireland is taxed upon the proportion of one to eleven. That is distinctly wrong, and it ought to be altered so as to make the result agree with the principle of right and justice. There can be no difficulty in doing so, and why should you select for taxation articles which press most severely upon our already overtaxed people? Why select tea, whisky, and tobacco as the means for swelling up this inordinate revenue, for a war which by no means redounds to the happiness or to the glory of the British Empire? We had a voluminous statement the other day from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which showed that the expenditure of Great Britain had doubled since 1850—I think his figures were that in 1850 the income was about £50,000,000, and now it is considerably over £100,000,000. We know also that the expenditure is now going up by leaps and bounds. I am old enough to recollect what has happened for a great number of years back, and perhaps I may claim to speak with some authority. But I can put my hand on my heart and say that I see very little symptom of any material progress or prosperity in Ireland, a result which mainly arises from this inequality of taxation and this imposition of burdens that have been demonstrated to be most unfair and unjust to the people of Ireland.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): Personally, I feel indebted to the hon. Member for Peterborough for his intervention in this debate. Though we have had a number of speeches upon this question, it is very seldom that hon. Members opposite favour us by recording their reasons for objecting to the claim of Ireland to financial redress. I cannot say that the hon. Member has converted me to his point of view. He holds his own views to his own satisfaction, and that is an extremely agreeable frame of mind to be in. I do not know whether I shall be able to change his opinions by introducing to his mind any doubt upon the subject. One remark which the hon. Member made was that he generally felt rather confused about these Irish questions. I may say that the hon. Member is not the first English Member who has been confused upon Irish questions, and who has voted upon them without a full understanding of their bearings. I am afraid that the arguments of the hon. Member were, to my inferior mind, also somewhat confusing. He spoke about the Commission which made the Report upon Irish finance, and he told us that while he thoroughly agreed with the facts he disagreed with the findings of that Commission. Now I agree both with the facts and the findings of that Commission, which brought a good deal of light to my mind, and I have no fault to find with them. I wish the hon. Member had given us some solid reasons for his disagreement with the findings of that Commission. He went back to the Act of Union and to the Act of 1816, and he told us that after the consolidation of the two Exchequers Ireland did not pay the tax she was entitled to pay under the Act of Union. If the hon. Member would do me the favour of consulting me I could show him certain papers in the Library of this House which deal with that period of 1816, and I think I could convince him that Ireland has overpaid her proportion by many millions sterling.

*MR. PURVIS: I was only alluding to what the Royal Commission found as facts, and I agree with their findings.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE: Then the hon. Member agrees that Ireland is overtaxed. If that is his view I hope he will vote with us.

*MR. PURVIS: I said that what the Royal Commission found as fact I agreed with.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE: Then the hon. Member is in agreement with the findings of the Royal Commission. There is another important element to be considered in regard to the period of 1816. In the treaty there was a provision for the periodical revision of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and that revision has never been carried out. Upon that clause in the Act which consolidated the two Exchequers the claim of Ireland to a large

e found to be non-productive. ıre one or two small matters to I would wish to direct the atten- the Chancellor of the Exchequer, haps, in his absence, the Vice- ɔnt of the Board of Agri- in Ireland will take an ɛnt interest in them. The efers to the redemption of quit in Ireland. I have repeatedly for information on this subject, but ırmation has been given. Year by under the operation of the Land ıse Act certain quit rents are ıed in Ireland, and the money is, so we can ascertain, devoted to the ɔtion of charges on Crown property land. That is the conclusion which drawn from the small amount of ation vouchsafed to us on the ;. I should now like to learn from ancellor of the Exchequer or some right hon. Gentleman on the ry Bench what has been done with ney received from the redemption of ents in Ireland, and how much has been received from that source. ɛrtain I shall have the sympathy ; Vice-President of the Board of lture in Ireland when I say that ıoney is Irish money, and should ɔplied to Ireland, and that all ts derived from that source in should be devoted to Irish pur- There are many directions in l in which it can be usefully em- . I may suggest one way in which ht be applied to remedy a very g grievance—namely, in the re- taxation in towns in Ireland. Under ocal Government Act the Irish have received no benefit whatever, king them all round, their taxation ɔn increased under the Act, in some ɔ an enormous extent. I think, ɔre, that this money, which is Irish , ought to be well employed ıcing taxation in towns in Ireland. ɛ asking no favour, we simply ɔhe restoration of what we regard own money. There is another which presses very hardly on poor in Ireland. The Chancellor of the ıuer expresses his anxiety to be and generous to poor people in l, and he might easily avail f of this opportunity to help them. le to the question of law costs in l, in connection with small agree- small contracts, and the taking : administration orders. Though the charges are not very large, they yet press very hardly on the poor, and I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might consider the question of relief in this direction. Suppose the occupier of a labourer's cottage or a small farm dies, his successor has to take out letters of administration, at a time when the family can perhaps ill afford to spend money. This is a small matter, and would only have a trifling effect on the receipts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I hope the right hon. Gentle- will consider it. We claim in Ireland that we get nothing like our proper share of Imperial expenditure. That point has been already raised by my hon. friend the Member for North Donegal, and the figures he quoted will be in the recollection of the House, but I will take one or two concrete cases. Two years ago, under the Public Offices (Acquisition of Sites) Act, and the Public Buildings Expenses Act, you spent 3½ millions of public money on public buildings in London. I would like to know how much was spent in Dublin on public buildings in that year. So far as I can gather no money at all was spent. This is a matter which some of us feel very strongly. We have in Dublin a picture gallery and a museum, but because neither of these buildings is large enough to hold the collections which ought to be placed in them, a number of interesting objects of antiquarian interest are not able to be housed. If you spend three and a half millions on public buildings in London I think you ought to contribute a small amount for public buildings in Dublin. In addition to its endowment the British Museum gets £160,000 of public money every year, whereas the Dublin Museum only gets £1,600. That is not a fair proportion, and if, on the question of Imperial expenditure, reliance is to be placed on the argument as to a set-off, I think the attention of the Government ought to be directed to this matter of public buildings. I had intended to deal with the question of the new duties to be imposed on spirits and beer in Ireland; but I will content myself with saying that the taxation of spirits has been increasing for the last forty-five years in Ireland, and now stands at as high a figure as it ever stood before. I do not speak in this matter either from a temperance or an anti-temperance point of view. I look upon it as an industrial matter, and the danger is that by your

taxation you may injure what is after all the only important industry remaining in Ireland. The taxation of whisky has now reached such a point that distillers in Ireland are taking very serious alarm. At an important meeting held in Dublin a few days ago an able statement of the case was made by Mr. Nagle. The distillers are certainly very seriously concerned at the possible results of the Budget.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: The hon. Baronet speaks of only one industry in Ireland. Are there not other industries in Belfast?

SIR T. G. ESMONDE: I am very glad that Belfast is an exception, and I am only sorry we have not a few more in Ireland. What I would press on the Government is that in view of the danger of serious interference with a most important industry it ought to be taken into consideration whether the tax on whisky should not be imposed for one year only, and that we should have a guarantee that it will not be repeated next year. A large amount of employment is given by this industry in Ireland. It is the only important industry outside Belfast, and the Belfast industries are not taxed. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give us some assurance that the taxation he now proposes to put on this industry will not remain on it longer than one year.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): With much that has been said on the subject of the condition of Ireland no doubt many of us agree, and are sorry to agree. I am sure that everybody wishes in every way to do their utmost to develop all the industries of Ireland that can possibly be fostered. But we must remember in discussing this subject that what is especially wanted is an increase of capital in Ireland. I think no one can shut his eyes to the fact that the tendency has been to drive capital from Ireland of late years; and although there is an immense quantity of capital available from every part of the world, it is extremely difficult for any company to be got up, at least very few, to develop industries in Ireland. That goes to the root of the difficulty. If the political agitation and difficulties in Ireland were got over, there is no doubt whatever that there would be an enormous quantity of capital available for the development of industries in Ireland, which would tend to improve the condition of that country. The real question raised in this debate seems to me to be whether there should be a differential rate of taxation between Ireland and England. Now, I have studied with considerable care the Report of the Royal Commission, the statistics of which are of great interest, especially those relating to the social condition of Ireland and England. It must be acknowledged that there is not only an Irish side to this question but an English side, and those of us who are interested in England maintain that justice to England is as desirable as justice to Ireland, and that it is important that, while granting justice to Ireland, an injustice to England should not be inflicted. The real question is, "Is any Irishman taxed more severely than any Englishman in the same position of life?" That is after all the practical point. Reference has been made to the Act of Union, but it seems to me that if the Act of Union is kept to absolutely, Ireland would pay a great deal more than now. When the fiscal system was rearranged in 1816, it was then thought that a fair arrangement had been come to. Although it is quite true that the present arrangement does in some way affect Ireland more hardly than we could wish, still the alterations made then were for the benefit of Ireland. The Report speaks of the great question of the separate entities of England, Ireland, and Scotland. I want to know why it should be taken for granted that England, Ireland, and Scotland should be taken as separate entities for the purpose of considering this question.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): The Act of Union says so.

MR. BARTLEY: But if the whole scheme of the Act of Union were carried out it would be to the detriment of Ireland. If we are to make separate entities of England, Ireland, and Scotland, we might as well make separate entities of every district in the country, and the result would be an absolute absurdity. At page 18 of the Report it is said that the income tax is a gauge of the relative wealth of countries. Income tax statistics form immensely useful data for an inquiry into the general wealth of a nation, but they do not in any way constitute an index of the capacity of individuals to bear taxation. The amount of assessment in Ireland can in-

no way affect the individual payments. The Report says that the assessment of Ireland is very much smaller than that of England, and therefore the fact that Ireland is assessed at a smaller ratio than England is a plea for a smaller payment of the income tax. You might as well use the same argument in regard to the Isle of Wight.

MR. CRILLY: The Isle of Wight is not Ireland.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: He is drunk.

MR. CRILLY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker——

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: I withdraw.

MR. CRILLY: The hon. Member has accused me of being drunk. Is that proper language?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is not a proper expression; but the hon. Member has withdrawn it.

MR. CRILLY: Has he withdrawn it?

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: I beg to withdraw it, and apologise.

MR. CRILLY: I accept the apology.

MR. BARTLEY: I was referring to assessments. The assessment of Ireland is relatively very much smaller than that of England, but it in no way affects the capacity of the people of that country to pay taxes. There are elaborate calculations in the Report which show the difference between the actual receipts from income tax and the net assessment, and that again is used all through the Report as an argument why there should be reduction. It shows that there would be considerable benefit by reducing the taxation simply because the great bulk of the people have small incomes, but so far from that being a reason why a greater reduction should be made, it is quite the other way; and therefore I say Parliament in its wisdom has done all it can to do away with these hardships. A great deal is said in the Report of the Commissioners as to the calculations per head, but such calculations are most fallacious. It is quite true that if two countries are the same in every respect, the calculation per head is a test of the capacity to pay taxes, but that calculation is quite upset when of two countries compared one is increasing in population and the other decreasing. Take the case of a family of five, each earning so much; when another comes into the family the average per head is less, but the burden is greater, so that the calculation per head is one that may lead us into considerable difficulties. According to the Report Ireland paid £1 18s. 3d. per head as against £2 11s. 10d. paid in England; but it is a fallacy to draw from that any conclusion as to the taxable capacity of the two countries as a whole. We might as well take a small village in England with a gross income of £2,500. If the inhabitants all smoked and drank in reason their taxation would not exceed 10s. per head. No one would dream of that as a reason for altering the taxation of that district, or for treating it as a separate entity. The statement that identity of taxation does not necessarily involve identity of burden is true not only of Ireland, but of every part of the United Kingdom. It is harder for a man with £1 a week to pay 1d. than it would be for a man with £2 a week to pay 2d. It is often said that the reason why Ireland is over-taxed is that it is the habit of the people there to drink whisky and the habit of the people in England to drink beer. That statement is hardly correct, because I find it stated in the Report that the consumption of spirits per head in Ireland is very much less than in Great Britain, although that of beer is only about half as much. That, no doubt, is very satisfactory to Ireland from the temperance standpoint, but it does not bear out the argument that that is the reason why they are over-taxed. Another reason why the taxation of Ireland should be reduced is said to be that the average income out of which the Irishman can purchase is smaller than the Englishman's. If that argument is to prevail, taxation must be reduced in every poor district, and I should require that my constituency should receive consideration. [An HON. MEMBER: Islington is not Ireland.] The argument really comes to this—that there ought to be a sliding scale of duties according to the consumption or poverty of a district. As long as alcohol is consumed and treated as a taxable commodity there is no possibility of strict theoretical justice in taxation.

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University): I think every Irish Unionist, whatever may

in his opinions on other points, must desire that the question of the financial relations of England and Ireland should be kept clear of the question of the obligation of Ireland to assist England in an Imperial contest. If the Union is accepted at all it must imply that in all such contests Ireland must go heartily with England, not only as she is now splendidly doing—by the services of her soldiers, but also by her financial support. From an Imperial point of view, the strongest argument against Home Rule is that it would place the resources of Ireland in the hands of men who would be hostile to the interests of the Empire, and no reasonable man can deny that if a separate Parliament had existed in Ireland during the last few months, and if it had consisted mainly of men like the hon. Members opposite, its whole influence would have been employed in thwarting and injuring England in the present war. Looking, however, at this question on its own merits, I have always maintained that Ireland, according to the Act of Union, and according to the uniform precedents of Irish legislation, has a right to be treated in matters of finance (as she is treated on nearly every other subject) as a distinct unit; and that if it can be shown that common taxation presses upon her with disproportionate force if the ratio of her contribution to Imperial taxation does not at least roughly correspond with her relative wealth as compared with the other portions of the Empire, that is a matter demanding legislative inquiry and redress. The root of this whole controversy is that a financial commission established on high English financial authority that such a disparity existed. It is quite certain that many things have been acting against Ireland. The main exemptions from taxation which she once enjoyed were nearly all abolished when indirect taxation was mainly concentrated on a very few articles of general consumption. Her population has rapidly diminished, while the population of England and Scotland has enormously increased, and this has naturally affected the proportion of taxation per head in the two countries. Great Britain is a great manufacturing country, and has been advancing in wealth with gigantic strides. Ireland, except perhaps in one province, has made no such progress. Both the level of material prosperity and the rate of material progress are wholly different on the two sides of the Channel, and this necessarily implies a great difference in the pressure of taxation. Then there is the fact that while hardly more than one-half of the taxation of Great Britain is indirect taxation, in Ireland the proportion is about 76 per cent., and that by far the larger part of this is the whisky tax. Ireland, unfortunately, is a whisky drinking, not a beer drinking, country, and whisky for very good reasons is much more heavily taxed than beer. There are causes of another kind that have tended to keep her poor. A much lower level of industry; political agitation, which has steadily driven capital out of the country, and turned the people from the paths of industry: land legislation, which has directly impoverished the owners of the soil, withdrawn the whole rental of the country from its improvement, broken down all sense of the obligation of contract, which is the first condition of real industrial prosperity, and done more than any single thing to promote the emigration of Irish capital and to prevent English capital coming over to Ireland—all these things have established a great difference between the two countries, and whatever controversy there may be about their relative taxation at present, there is very little difference about the fact that, in the sixties at least, it was grossly unfair, when Ireland appears to have paid about an eighth of the taxation of the Empire, and when out of a revenue of a little more than seven millions nearly five millions were taken for Imperial purposes. The First Lord of the Treasury has used language about indirect taxation which seems to me full of fallacy. He speaks as if in comparing the taxation of the two countries it ought to be altogether omitted. I fully grant that there are great difficulties in tracing its incidence, but after all indirect taxation is taxation—a sum taken from private persons just as really as taxation, and it cannot be omitted from any calculation of the comparative payments made by the two countries, and if the same indirect taxation falls on an article which is proportionately much more consumed in one country than the other, this may act most unfairly upon the country that chiefly uses it. In his speech in 1898 the First Lord brought forward an argument intended to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Irish claim. He says—

"It is stated that Ireland under the present system of indirect taxation pays two and a half millions in excess of what she ought

to pay. Suppose the duty on tea, tobacco, and spirits were raised to amounts that would make it impossible for any of the poorer classes in Ireland to enjoy any of these three articles of consumption. On this supposition the Irish grievance would disappear. Ireland would pay nothing because it consumed nothing, and because it paid nothing it would have no ground for financial complaint. Tax it sufficiently and you will remedy all its wrongs."

This argument appears to me to be pure sophistry. It assumes that there can be only one kind of financial grievance. Undoubtedly if by increasing duties or in any other way you greatly diminish the actual taxation of Ireland, you will take away the grievance of her being over-taxed. But if you did this by preventing her enjoying the chief luxuries of a poor man's life you would be committing an act of tyranny of the grossest kind, and establishing a new grievance much greater than that you remove. But is this a proof that the original grievance was not a real one? Is there anything unnatural or paradoxical in this—any *reductio ad absurdum* of the Irish case? Is it not one of the most familiar truths in politics and in other things that it is often possible to remove an undoubted evil or injustice by some measure which would create a greater one; to cure one disease by a remedy which would produce another? At the same time, in my opinion the situation of late years has been very materially modified in favour of Ireland. When the Financial Commission reported on the proportion of Irish taxation to the general taxation of the Empire it was estimated at between one-eleventh and one-twelfth. It is now, according to the Treasury Returns, not more than one-fifteenth. The proportion of Irish taxation devoted to purely Irish purposes has steadily and greatly increased, and that devoted to Imperial purposes correspondingly diminished. The system of graduated taxation which has come into fashion tells in favour of the poorer country against the richer one. A vast amount of taxation is now drawn from death duties on very large properties. Such properties, though numerous in Great Britain, are extremely rare in Ireland. The income tax is now graduated up to £700 a year, and this is plainly to the advantage of a country in which small properties bear a much larger proportion to large ones than in Great Britain. Imperial credit also in the form of loans has been given to Ireland in a much larger proportion than to Great Britain. It appears in a memorandum of Sir E. Hamilton that up to March, 1893, out of about £120,000,000 advanced by the State as loans for local purposes about fifty-two millions had gone to Ireland. The rate of interest on various old loans has been within the last two or three years reduced, and under the Purchase Acts eighteen millions have been lent with the object of creating peasant proprietors. It is quite true that these loans, except in cases where they have been remitted, are not a loss to England, as they are paid for by interest, but they are unquestionably a gain to Ireland, as they place the best credit in the world at her disposal—a credit certainly much better than she could have obtained for herself. And in addition to this many grants have been of late years made to Ireland from Imperial sources. There has been some controversy about whether the £700,000 granted to Ireland in relief of agricultural rates two years ago should be regarded as an offset. Taken as a whole, in my opinion, it certainly should not. The grant was made equally to Great Britain and to Ireland on the ground of agricultural depression, and as Ireland is a poorer and a more purely agricultural country than England she would have had a full right to it if the financial question had never arisen. But though I cannot admit that a common grant given to the two countries on the same ground was a special favour to one of them, it is no doubt true, as the First Lord of the Treasury has contended, that Ireland, being more largely agricultural than England, has benefited in a greater proportion by the grant, though it is also true that she only obtained it two years later than England. But last session a good deal more was done. When I last addressed the House on this question in 1898 I urged that the best way of dealing with it was by some special grants developing the resources of Ireland, and I instanced the Congested Districts Board, which was doing so much to improve the poorer parts of Ireland, and agricultural and technical education, which was so sorely needed. In both of these my wishes have been largely fulfilled. £20,000 a year from Imperial funds has been added to the previous £40,000 a year granted to the Congested Districts Board, and although the new Agricultural and Technical Education Department has not been endowed altogether as I desired

Will the right hon. Gentleman get the face of the House to say that it ot mean what I say? Will he deny t is Ireland that is meant and g else? It is very easy to con- t a person and say no, but there is no lling me in the face of the words the Act of Union that it not point out Ireland as en- to be regarded as a separate entity. That is the first point. next is the Act of 1816 or 1817, h also regards Ireland as a separate entity. It says that Ireland, rding as circumstances may permit demand, was to be granted certain nptions and abatements. Does that n that Ireland is not to be treated as parate fiscal entity? I say distinctly I defy contradiction, that it was templated, even by the Act of 1817, t Ireland should be regarded as a arate fiscal entity. If I have estab- hed that, have not I established erything? I do not know how our se can be answered once that funda- ental position is conceded. The first int I make is that the verdict of the ommission must be accepted. The erdict of the Commission stated that reland was taxed between £2,500,000 o £3,000,000 a year beyond its taxable apacity. That is not denied. I know hat the Royal Commission is rather neered at, although it consisted of some of the most eminent financial experts in the United Kingdom. I was rather surprised to find the First Lord of the Treasury sneering at it as an intelligent Commission. Does the right hon. Gentle- man and those who sneer at the Commis- sion mean that they fabricated figures? Does he mean that they told lies in their Report? Does he mean that they put on paper calculations and statements which any financial expert could discover to be false if they were false? The thing, of course, is absurd, and therefore I take the verdict of the Commission for granted, especially as I believe the right hon. Gentleman admits it to be true on the supposition that Ireland is to be treated as a separate entity. Next let me take the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury as the principal exponent of all the most specious points made against us. Here I must say that much as I have read about and tried to master this question, I was fairly carried off my legs, one or two years ago, listening to the right hon. Gentleman, and I really wish we had someone on our side who could perform a similar feat. I have recovered myself, however, and I find that his speech on that occasion is really a series of the most brilliant sophistries ever spoken in this House. Take the first of them. He says in the first place that everyone is taxed alike in the three kingdoms. But that is exactly our grievance. If Ireland is entitled to separate treatment, as it is declared to be by the Act of Union and by the Act of 1817, why should every person in Ireland be taxed in the same way and on the same level as the people in England? We are entitled to be taxed less, and to tax us the same is to do us injustice. Of course you may say, "Oh, the Treaty of Union is old, it is broken up." If you say that, my reply is that it is not the first time you have spoken that way about treaties. It is not a reputable way to regard treaties, and it recalls to our minds recollections of Limerick and other places which forbid us putting the utmost confidence in any British Minister, including the right hon. Gentleman. He said, again, it was only the individual that was taxed. It was not nations at all that were taxed. Here, again, the Act of Union came in with the answer that Ireland was entitled to be treated not as a collection of individuals, but as a nation. The next thing argued is that there is really no Irish grievance at all, because you have got taxes mostly on commodi- ties, and you need not use these com- modities. Don't use tea, and you won't pay the tax on tea. Don't use coffee, and you won't pay the tax on coffee. Don't drink whisky, and you will pay no tax on whisky. Don't drink beer, and you will pay no tax on beer. I remarked before that the reply to that was that it would cut the ground from the doctrine of Free Trade. Why should you pay a tax on anything except commodities if it does no harm to tax commodities? If, for instance, the President of the Local Government Board—I believe he is a Protectionist—came down to-morrow and proposed to tax corn, or the hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet proposed to renew the corn duties, he might answer any opponent by saying, "It is really no tax upon you; you need not eat bread." Then if they take to eating oatmeal like the Scotch, and if you put a tax on oatmeal, it is no harm, they need not eat oatmeal; or if you make bread out of rye, and you put a tax on rye, they need not eat rye bread. You can

eat turnips, and probably you might be told to live upon shamrocks. I have a strong suspicion myself, however, that if we ceased to use whisky or porter, you would soon find something else to tax. Therefore, I do not find much comfort in the argument, no matter how eloquently stated. It seems to me to be absurd. The right hon. Gentleman next asked in the speech, how are existing Irish industries injuriously affected by the taxation of Ireland? I can give two answers to that. The first is that the question is entirely irrelevant. If it were true that existing Irish industries were not injuriously affected it would not serve your case one bit, if we were able to show still that we were overtaxed. The Act of Union does not say anything about Irish industries being injuriously affected by taxation. It provides simply that we are not to be overtaxed. But who will have the audacity to say that not one of the Irish industries is injuriously affected? You cannot take money out of England without injuring your industries. Still more is it true that you cannot deplete Ireland of its capital without injuring, not one, but all the industries she has, or had, for I am afraid that they are nearly all extinct. But now I come to the question of the set off. With reference to this matter I was for a time completely nonplussed by what I heard from the right hon. Gentleman. I imagined that we were really contributing £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 at least in excess of what we received, but I found to my astonishment that we were a dead loss to the Exchequer of £360,000 a year. It took me some time to recover, but I am glad to say that I have recovered. Allow me to say in the first place to the right hon. Gentleman that I hope he will not consider me offensive, for I don't mean to be so, when I state that I consider this argument of the set off the most ridiculous that has ever been palmed off in an assembly of thinking men. If this argument of the set off is to remain, I ask can there be anything like overtaxation in any country under the sun? I believe a general complaint is made that Italy is overtaxed and of the peasantry being ground to the dust by taxes on this, that, and the other thing. I think I have read the same thing of France, and certainly of Turkey. How can there be overtaxation in these countries on the principle of the right hon. Gentleman? All the money raised in Italy is spent in Italy. There are fifty millions of money raised in Turkey, and every penny is kept by the Sultan—or the Grand Assassin, as he used to be called—in Turkey. How can Turkey be overtaxed? The Sultan benefits his people. He raises a large revenue and he taxes this, that, and the other things. He wrings it out of them by knouts and other instruments of that kind. But he spends it all at home, and, consequently, Turkey cannot be overtaxed. I do not see how there can be anything like over-taxation at all, and all the books on political economy that I have ever read are a series of absurdities, and really the right hon. Gentleman cannot do better, if he is right, than edit some of these publications—the works of men like Mill, Hume, Adam Smith, and all those distinguished writers whose doctrines have been accepted by all Englishmen, I believe, and especially by all Scotchmen. I would suggest to him most respectfully to edit these books and put notes to them. Wherever he meets the word over-taxation he should say "Fallacy." He might also add that there is no taxation at all, because every person willingly bears it, and he need not pay it if he likes to abstain from consuming commodities. But, until he takes this course and goes to the logical conclusion from his own premises, I must continue to believe that this matter of the set off is essentially ridiculous. Let me give another answer to the right hon. Gentleman. I am sorry, but I am sure it was not intentional on his part, that in the appendix to his very clever speech, which was printed by his authority and circulated broadcast throughout this country, there should be a series of misleading calculations. I have used an adjective which is moderate in comparison with what I feel, but when I find the right hon. Gentleman acting in this way I really become a bit angry. He tots up all the money spent in Ireland, and gives a magnificent total which he debits to Ireland. Does he do that when he comes to England? I invite his attention to this fact. There are nineteen millions of money expended on ordnance stores and other such Imperial services, every penny of which is spent in England, and by what right does the right hon. Gentleman credit that to the Imperial account instead of to the English

account, if he sticks to his principle of accounting? I say, in the name of Heaven, take one principle or the other. Either count Irish everything spent in Ireland, English everything spent in England, and Scotch everything spent in Scotland. Let him do that and I defy him to bring out a Budget such as he produced two years ago. Or, let him account as local expenditure only that which is strictly local in the three countries respectively, and the same result will follow. But I do not think it is fair to adopt one principle when it suits you for Ireland, and to adopt another principle when it suits you for England. Having dealt with the right hon. Gentleman, I am afraid most ineffectively, I address myself to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. May I ask him one question arising out of the present Budget? I observe that he has added to the taxes on tea, tobacco, whisky, and porter, for a certain period. Is he going to make these additions permanent?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): All those duties are temporary, and are intended to be temporary; but I cannot pledge myself as to what will happen next year.

*MR. CLANCY: All I can say is that the answer is just what I have expected. Once you put a tax on you never take it off.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The last time 6d. was put on spirits it was taken off next year.

*MR. CLANCY: That reminds me that the example set on that occasion may be followed by the right hon. Gentleman now. In a previous speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked what taxes pinched in Ireland, and what was our remedy. My answer to his question is that every tax pinches, because my theory is that you are over-taxing Ireland, and therefore by adding anything to the taxation of Ireland, whether on tea, tobacco, whisky, porter, or anything else, you are doing an injustice to Ireland. He says, "What remedy do you propose?" Almost the first speech I heard in this House was one delivered by the late Mr. Gladstone, and I was greatly impressed by one statement he made. He was challenged by the Conservative Government, then in office, to propose his scheme of Home Rule. He said, and I remember his words: "There lies the power, and there lies also the responsibility." We have not the power to carry out our theories, and whatever remedy we propose would, I am sure, be rejected. It is your business to propose remedies. It is you who have the power, and you who have the responsibility. I will, however, say one thing—we want no alms from you. It won't do to give us leave to wear the shamrock. It won't do to send the Queen over to Ireland, even though her visit be followed by servile addresses. It won't do to offer us gewgaws when we want real and substantial justice. We want justice; it is a very simple thing. We should be content with justice, but for anyone to tell the House now or hereafter that the Irish people will ever be content with anything less than justice will be the offspring either of ignorance or hypocrisy.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This debate has been a remarkable one. In the first place it is in singular contrast with the debate which took place on the same subject on the motion of the hon. Member for Longford, three years ago. Then there was an amount of interest in the Report of the Financial Relations Commission, and an amount of belief in their opinions and in what was supposed to result from those opinions, which has long ago faded. But, perhaps, the more remarkable feature of this debate was the manner in which it was opened by the hon. Member for East Donegal. The motion before the House is very nearly identical with that which was moved by the hon. Member for Longford three years ago. The hon. Member for East Donegal, with that financial knowledge of which we are all aware, and with that ability with which we are all acquainted, laid before the House an interesting dissertation upon the economic condition of Ireland in the past and in the present. But not a word did he say, as far as I remember, about the Report of the Royal Commission on which this motion is based, and very little indeed upon the question of over-taxation, with which it is principally concerned. The hon. Member told us a good deal about the depopulation of Ireland, about the excessive emigration from Ireland, and about the drain out of Ireland of funds which should maintain the people; but he attributed that drain rather to absentee landlords, or to the interest on advances made by the State for tenants' purchases in Ireland, or matters

of that kind, than to over-taxation. I was astonished that so keen an observer as the hon. Member should consider that the interest on advances made by the Exchequer to enable Irish tenants to become owners of their holdings, and, therefore, to improve the economic and social condition of Ireland, ought to be objected to as a drain upon the economic resources of Ireland. I am bound to say that if anything could make one hopeless of doing anything which could do good to Ireland in the future it would be such an opinion as that expressed by the hon. Member.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I stated that was one of the principal economic facts which have an important bearing on the fiscal question, and ought to be borne in mind in any fiscal arrangements. I never complained of the payment of interest on advances. I pointed out that the money issued from the Exchequer to landlords who were selling to their tenants left charges on the land of Ireland, which would have to be met by a continuous drain from Ireland to this country for sixty years.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It may be an economic fact, but I fail to see what it has to do with the motion before us. If I come to the views of the hon. Member upon the general subject I would demur altogether to his picture of the economic condition of Ireland at the present time. No one will deny—I am the last to deny—that Ireland is a poor country compared with England. Ireland has not advanced and is not advancing at the same rate as the industrial parts of England—it is obvious to anyone. But I ventured to state the other day in the House, and I repeat that statement, that Ireland being mainly an agricultural country is more prosperous as an agricultural country than the agricultural parts, at any rate of the south, of England. There are industrial parts of Ireland, such as Belfast and its neighbourhood, which are quite as prosperous as any industrial parts of England. Taken as a whole Ireland is poorer than England, but it is not so poor as the hon. Member suggests, and it is becoming richer. Take, for example, the question of population. We know, unfortunately—and no one is more sorry for it than I am—that for many years past the population of Ireland has been decreasing. Taking the years between 1888 and 1898, I believe the population of Ireland has decreased by 5·47 per cent.; but in the last five years of those ten years the population of Ireland has decreased only by 1·5 per cent. I think in these figures we may have good ground for hoping that, as soon as the next census, which is now coming on, is complete, we may find a check to the depopulation of Ireland. The hon. Member spoke of emigration. In 1888 the emigration from Ireland amounted to 79,000 persons. In 1898 it only amounted to 32,000. I suspect that if anybody would compare the decrease of population in the rural parts of Ireland at the present time with the decrease of population in the rural parts of the south of England, the comparison would be in favour of Ireland. Then, what is the position of the farmers in the two countries? I am best acquainted with the south of England. I know this very well—that in the south of England it is by no means easy to get a tenant for a vacant farm. There are thousands of acres of land, which in former years grew corn, which now practically grow nothing worth having. In the case of Ireland, land in cultivation has increased rather than decreased—I do not say in arable cultivation.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Grass is not cultivation.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Oh, yes, it is. Pasture is a most valuable kind of cultivation. It has increased rather than decreased in Ireland in the last ten years. And what is the case with regard to letting farms in Ireland? Does not any one know what enormous sums are paid by way of tenant right? Take another point. There are many symptoms, I do not say of prosperity as compared with the industrial prosperity of England, but of improvement in Ireland. Take the receipts from railway traffic, a very fair test. They have increased 23 per cent. in Ireland in the last ten years. Take the number of joint stock companies doing business in Ireland. They have nearly doubled in the same time; their capital has more than doubled. Take the value of the foreign imports into Ireland. That, again, has doubled; and yet I remember that in the Reports of the Royal Commission there was a good deal said about the impossibility, owing to their poverty, of Irishmen consuming even their own produce. Then,

again, take the deposits in the banks. The deposits in the Irish joint stock banks have increased by 27 per cent. in ten years. The deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank in Ireland have increased from £5,250,000 in 1888 to £9,500,000 in 1898; and I can say from my own knowledge that only the other day, when we were asking for subscriptions for the War Loan, no small amount of subscriptions and no small number of subscribers came to the Bank of England from Ireland. I do not say for a moment that Ireland is not a poor country; but I do say that the condition of Ireland is distinctly improving, and that the suggestions which were made by the hon. Member for East Donegal, and which have been frequently repeated in this House, as to the terrible economic conditions of Ireland in the present day are exaggerated to a degree which I think is to be regretted by anyone who is anxious, as I am, for the prosperity of Ireland. That was the pith of the argument of the hon. Member for East Donegal in moving this Amendment, but, of course, since then it has been supported on other grounds. It has been supported on the old and well-known ground of the Report of the Royal Commission, and the main part of the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down was devoted to an argument of that kind. I do not want to question the ability of the Royal Commission—I have never done so—or the fairness with which they endeavoured to investigate the case submitted to them, but no one can deny that they did a very small part of the work entrusted to them. When this particular statement of opinion—

"That, whilst the actual tax revenue of Ireland is about one-eleventh of that of Great Britain, the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is not more than one-twentieth,"

is put forward as not merely the opinion of the majority of the Royal Commission, but practically the result of the whole inquiry which they were directed to undertake, I can only say such a representation is most unjustifiable. The Royal Commissioners simply recorded that opinion. They did not state that the fact, which they considered proved, was in their opinion a grievance to Ireland. They did not state that it required a remedy. They could not have done so, because three of the most distinguished men who signed that Report agreed in the opinion that the set off, as it has been described, ought to be considered in dealing with this matter. But their opinion, assuming it to have been accurate at the time it was made, is no longer accurate at the present time. As my right hon. friend the Member for the University of Dublin has stated to-night, circumstances have changed since then. On the figures of 1893-94 the Royal Commissioners considered that the actual tax revenue of Ireland was about 1-11th of that of Great Britain. In the last year for which we have figures the actual tax revenue of Great Britain was £108,837,000 and that of Ireland £8,202,000, so that in that year the tax revenue of Ireland was hardly more than 1-15th instead of 1-11th as compared with that of Great Britain. And when I am accused, as I have been accused by the hon. Member for North Dublin and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyrone, of adding to the inequality by the Budget of the present year, I would venture to deny it. I have taken care, in considering the additional taxation which I propose to impose this year on account of the war, to lay a very large part of the burden upon direct taxation—in other words, upon the income tax. Out of a little over £14,000,000 no less than nearly £8,500,000 will be derived from the income tax. [AN HON. MEMBER: Too much.] An hon. friend behind me says that is too much; but I have considered in this matter the position of the indirect taxpayers throughout the country at large, not merely in Ireland, but in the whole of the United Kingdom. [Mr. LOUGH dissented.] The hon. Member forgets. I do not think he was in the House when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyrone addressed the House.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Yes, I was.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Well, he could not have heard the right h Gentleman, who is an Irish repres tive, which he is not, stating plainly and very straightforwardly in his opinion the income tax is perfe fair as between Irishmen and Englishmen.

MR. LOUGH: I do not accept it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That may be. But the hon. Member for North Tyrone stated what I think no one can deny—that in the matter of direct taxation Irishmen had no grievance whatever.

MR. LOUGH: Then he gave the case away.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member for North Dublin will not agree in that.

*MR. CLANCY: No.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member bases himself upon the Act of Union.

*MR. CLANCY: That is a very strange thing.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is a very strange thing for him to do, because the leader of the party of which the hon. Member for North Dublin is a member has openly, and I think frequently, stated that in his opinion the Treaty of Union has no validity at all. [Cries of "Abolish it, then."] I welcome the adhesion of the hon. Member for North Dublin as a supporter of the Act of Union. I am very glad to meet him on that ground, and I will endeavour, as well as I can, being a Unionist and believing in the Act of Union, to argue the case upon that ground. Now, I challenge the accuracy of the observation of the hon. Member for North Dublin that the Act of Union provided that Ireland should be considered as a separate fiscal entity. I will explain what I mean. Of course, everything on this subject is contained in the 7th Article of the Act of Union. There is no doubt whatever that in the first seven paragraphs of the 7th Article Ireland is treated as a separate fiscal entity. But these paragraphs merely relate to the system of separate taxation for the purpose of producing a proportionate revenue from each of the two countries—first of all on the basis of two parts from Ireland and fifteen from Great Britain, and afterwards, if necessary, on other alternative *data* which were suggested. But the whole matter is changed now. In the original system I entirely admit the countries were separate fiscal entities. The question of taxable capacity on the part of Ireland and on the part of Great Britain was the basis of that system——

MR. CLANCY: I was right, then.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member must wait till the end. He is a little premature. When the authors of the Act of Union framed that Article they did not contemplate that that system should endure. They intended that it should cease. What they did was to provide in the eighth and ninth paragraphs that—

"From the period of the declaration by the Parliament of the United Kingdom that the future expenditure which is incurred shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contributions of the two countries towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom according to any specific proportions or according to any of the rules hereinbefore prescribed"

MR. CLANCY: That was not to take place until the circumstances of the two countries became similar. That is laid down by the Article.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Very well. When in the opinion of the Parliament of the United Kingdom the circumstances had become similar and permitted it, all idea of proportionate contribution and of the taxable capacity of the two countries vanished into thin air.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly read on?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am going to. If the hon. Member will not be so impatient I will endeavour to argue the question. In 1817 the Parliament of the United Kingdom came to the conclusion that the time had arrived when the Exchequers should be amalgamated, and the provision which I have read put in force.

MR. CLANCY: You have broken the treaty.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: With all respect to the hon. Member, that is nonsense. The provision was in the Act of Union itself. The provision was adopted by the Parliament of the United Kingdom with the ready and willing assent of the Irish representatives of that day. [AN IRISH MEMBER: No.] Oh, yes, it was.

MR. CLANCY: With every Catholic excluded.

ANOTHER IRISH MEMBER: They were all drunk.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: And when the subject was inquired into in 1864 by a Committee of the House of Commons, upon which there was a majority of Irish Members, when the Catholics were included, what was the Report? Why, that the Parliament of 1816 was justified in

the course they had taken. And now I come to the words that the hon. Member for North Donegal desires me to read—

"The expenditure shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, subject to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand."

What does that mean? The hon. Member for North Dublin attributed—and I was very glad to hear it—great importance to the opinion of Lord Castlereagh. I should not have expected it, but still he did. I will quote the words of Lord Castlereagh. When Lord Castlereagh was asked to explain what those words meant, he said that "abatements might be made on articles where a high duty was unproductive or pressed heavily on the poor." That was the explanation of those words by the man who was the author of the Act of Union. And it is a justifiable explanation, because these words were taken from the original Act of Union between England and Scotland.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Hear, hear!

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: And throughout 100 years between the date of that Act and the date of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland, and ever since, they have never been interpreted otherwise than in this way, that the smaller kingdom should not suffer by the imposition of taxes which injure individuals or industries more in the smaller kingdom than in the greater. That is all those words mean. [AN HON. MEMBER: And quite enough, too.] The hon. Member says that it is quite enough, too. I want to ask whether, taking Lord Castlereagh's interpretation of those words — and surely they have some authority—there are any taxes at the present time which are either unproductive in Ireland or press heavily on the poor in Ireland as compared with other parts of the United Kingdom? I do not think I need dwell upon direct taxation. Whatever the hon. Member for West Islington, who is not an Irish Member, may say, whatever the hon. Member for North Dublin has said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyrone has given that case away. He has admitted that there is no reason whatever why a man having £700 or £800 in Ireland should not pay the same income tax as the man in Great Britain of the same income. And I might add that such a man has certainly other advantages which are denied to a person in a similar position in Great Britain. The class of income tax payers and the class of death duty payers in Ireland are the persons who benefit by the existing exemptions in Irish taxation as compared with British taxation. There is no house duty in Ireland. There is no land tax in Ireland. There are no assessed taxes in Ireland, and the class of income tax payers and death duty payers in that country benefit by those exemptions, and therefore they are not only as well off but better off than persons in similar position in Great Britain. I turn to indirect taxation. Of course, that is the crux of the argument. Our indirect taxation is certainly not unproductive in Ireland. The complaint is, that Irishmen pay too much of it. Does it press more hardly on industries or individuals in Ireland than in Great Britain? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyrone, who has been disowned by the Member for North Dublin, was very severe upon me with regard to indirect taxation. He did not mention beer, I was glad to observe, and I suppose he does not think that Irishmen drink beer. [AN IRISH MEMBER: Yes; they do.] I am sure they brew a good deal of it in the shape of porter. He said I was wrong in proposing to impose an additional tax upon spirits, tobacco and tea. But I want to know what is there in the taxation I propose, or which existed last year, upon spirits, or tobacco, or tea, which is harder on Ireland or the poor in Ireland than it is on Great Britain or the poor in Great Britain? It is impossible for any one to show, and no one has ever attempted to show, that that is the case. On the contrary, I think there is something to be said on the other side. I know that the poor in Ireland—the labouring class—on the average probably possess smaller incomes than the same class in Great Britain. I believe that is true. [AN HON. MEMBER: That is the question.] But I am afraid that in proportion to those incomes they spend a good deal more upon dutiable articles than the similar class in Great Britain. I am not going to charge Irish labourers or the Irish nation with being more improvident or more drunken than the similar class in England or Scotland; I should not think of it. But I do feel this —and I speak not of my own knowledge,

but of the opinions of many men of great weight and authority in Ireland—that drink is a greater curse to Ireland even than it is to Great Britain; that the temptations to drink in Ireland, the nature of the drink, and the various circumstances of the case lead to greater suffering and evil from drink in Ireland than they do in Great Britain. I remember a time when the taxes on spirits in Ireland were lower than the taxes on spirits in Great Britain, and in those days what happened? Why, the Government and Parliament of this country used to be abused for tempting the people of Ireland to their ruin by allowing them cheap whisky; and whatever views hon. Members from Ireland may entertain upon the subject of the taxation of Ireland, however anxious they may be that something—I do not know what, for no suggestion has been really made—should be done in order to diminish the taxation of Ireland as compared with the taxation of Great Britain, I cannot believe that anyone who really desires the prosperity and the welfare of the Irish people would desire to curse them with cheap whisky. Then I come to another article, a much more harmless article than whisky, and that is tea. Now, there is something very remarkable about the supposed consumption of tea in Ireland. When the returns which are annually presented relating to the financial relations between the two kingdoms were originally framed, an endeavour was made to ascertain the amount of tea used in Ireland as compared with the amount of tea used in Great Britain. Returns were obtained for a period of four months, I think, from the different railway and shipping companies, and other sources of information were tapped, with a view of ascertaining how much tea was consumed in Ireland, and the result was that it was considered that there was a much larger consumption of tea in Ireland per head than there was either in England or in Scotland. I confess I myself have some doubt as to the accuracy of that statement; I doubt whether the time for which the returns were taken was sufficiently long. But I assume them to be correct, and the result is this—that, whereas in England 5¼lb. of tea, then producing a taxation to the State of 1s. 9d., was consumed each year per head of the population, and 5lb. in Scotland, producing a taxation of 1s. 8d., in Ire[illegible] 6½lb. was consumed per head of [illegible] population, producing a taxation [illegible] 2s. 2d. I will not dwell on the que[illegible] of whether that extra consumption of [illegible] is or is not of advantage to the Ir[illegible] people. I have heard authorities in t[illegible] House doubt it; I think I have he[illegible] the hon. Member for East Mayo hims[illegible] say that, in his opinion, a good deal [illegible] harm is done by over-consumption of te[illegible]

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I belie[illegible] that to be the fact.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I believe b[illegible] the way in which it is made and by th[illegible] amount drunk, a good deal of harm i[illegible] done in Ireland by the over-consumpt[illegible] of tea. But I do not press that opini[illegible] at the present moment at all; I only refe[illegible] to the fact that the Irish people do consum[illegible] according to these returns, and according to the general evidence, more tea pe[illegible] head than the people in England or i[illegible] Scotland. Well, but surely that is no arg[illegible] ment for saying that the taxation on te[illegible] presses hardly or unfairly on Ireland. I should think, on the other hand, it is a clea[illegible] proof, if it is the fact, as undoubtedly it is, that with regard to these articles of beer, spirits, tobacco, and tea, the consumption has been increasing in Ireland, although the population has been diminishing and although on two of the articles the duty has been increased—surely it is a proof, not of the poverty of the people of Ireland, not of the evil effect upon them of our present system of taxation, but of their capacity for spending money in this way, and of the fact that the tax does not press as hardly upon them as is alleged by hon. Members from Ireland. I will conclude by admitting, as I began by admitting, that Ireland is a poorer country than England; but I do hope the House and the country will pay some regard to what was said this evening by a very impartial witness, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, upon this matter. We have not been neglectful as a Government, this House of Commons has not been neglectful, of the poverty of Ireland. Hardly a year has passed since this Parliament began in which we have not done something more for Ireland than has been done for Great Britain. Whether by way of increased grants for light railways, whether by way of grants for the foundation of an Agricultural Department, for-

technical education, or the Congested Districts Board, or larger contributions to pensions to national teachers than have been given in Great Britain, whether by way of a grant towards the payment of the rate upon agricultural land, which, though based on the same principle as the English grant, yet gave to Irish ratepayers, in proportion to the amount of local taxation in Ireland, a far larger amount than was given to the ratepayers of England, whether by the remission of loans, or by grants where there has been distress in Ireland; in all ways of that kind, the present Government and the present Parliament have endeavoured to consult the good of the population of Ireland. Well, it may be that we have not done enough, but we shall certainly persevere in the same path, and I am sure the House of Commons will readily support us in doing so. And if there be any local purpose in Ireland to which money is now devoted that might be better voted to another purpose, and we can obtain useful advice from the Irish Members—[A NATIONALIST MEMBER: From the Irish landlords.] Have hon. Members below the gangway never heard of the Report of the Recess Committee, in which their Leader took so prominent a part, and have we done nothing to carry out that Report? I say we shall endeavour to do what we can in this matter, but the demand made upon us to-night is a very different thing. The demand made upon us to-night is not to reduce indirect taxation generally for the benefit of the poorer classes throughout the United Kingdom. I can imagine many hon. Members on that side of the House considering that the balance between direct and indirect taxation at present is unfair, that the poor pay too much, and that the balance might be remedied in their favour. But that is not the request which hon. Members from Ireland make to us to-night. What is the request? It is put fairly and frankly by the hon. Member for North Dublin. He told us in so many words that he did not want equality between the poor taxpayer in Great Britain and the poor taxpayer in Ireland. He will never be satisfied unless the rich and the poor taxpayer in Ireland are put on a better footing than the rich and the poor taxpayer in Great Britain. That is a position which we will never accept. That is a demand on the part of Ireland and Irishmen to occupy the position and exercise the power of a governing part of this great Empire, and not to bear an equal share of its burdens. That is a demand which strikes at the root of our fiscal system of equal taxation on the same articles, which, in my belief, is as essential to good finance in the United Kingdom as the Union is essential to our political welfare. I decline to accept such a proposition, because, in my belief, under the mistaken name of justice to Ireland, it will impose a gross injustice upon the people of the rest of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by statements which had certainly some evidence of sympathy in them, because he contrasted the interest taken in this subject three years ago with the interest that was taken in it this evening. If in any court the same case was tried two, three, four, or twenty times, is it any wonder that the litigant who has been vainly attempting to secure justice and is unable to secure it should find that he is not able to get as good an audience at the end of half-a-dozen years as he might have done when his case was first put forward? In other words, the right hon. Gentleman presents us with the spectacle of the tired Englishman. We know very well that weariness of any Irish subject is the great ally of English Ministers. The Irish Members have only the same set of arguments to offer again and again. My hon. friend the Member for North Donegal has even been taunted because he has said something new. The right hon. Gentleman said the hon. Member did not once mention the Act of Union or the Report of the Royal Commission, and, because he sought by tapping fresh sources of debate to infuse into this subject some new interest, he was taunted with no longer relying upon the Report of the Royal Commission or the Act of Union. It is quite true that Irish topics do not interest the House so much as, for instance, the London Water Bill. That is the misfortune of the Irish Members, and we do not suppose they expect us to be as much interested in London Water Bills as Englishmen are themselves. But having been commissioned to voice the opinions of the Irish people I see no other alternative as

long as the Act of Union exists, except to put our complaints before this House. The right hon. Gentleman gave away his case when he declared that there was to be a set-off for Ireland. If the taxation were fair throughout the three kingdoms, why should Ireland get any set-off? Then the right hon. Gentleman said that Ireland was poor that the taxation was fair, but, Ireland being poor, an endeavour would be made by means of the Congested Districts Board, the light railways system, and in other ways to relieve the inequality. Where is the inequality? Is not the system perfect, is it not like the rain from Heaven falling alike upon the just and the unjust? Why is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, above all, to blaspheme the British system by declaring that Ireland must be differently treated from any other portion of the United Kingdom? I would contrast with that position what happened in this House when the right hon. Gentleman, in consequence of the little clamour—minute in volume—which arose from a few interested traders in this country, surrendered a great principle of this Budget in giving up the shilling contract tax. Touch an England interest, scratch an Englishman anywhere, and his complaint will receive more attention than if there were a million people starving in Ireland. The match tax was abolished because there was a procession on the Embankment, but you might have a procession of one million strong in Ireland and nobody would notice it except the police, who would beat them down with their batons. If you want an object lesson as to the way in which England and Ireland are governed you have it in the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to which I have alluded, for when the contract tax was objected to by a very small portion of the English community the right hon. Gentleman at once surrendered. Why is no such treatment given to us? Have the commercial classes of Liverpool, Manchester, and other large trade centres any treaty with the British Government which the contract tax infringes, or have they any argument beyond the fact that they do not like the tax? With one single tax on whisky in Ireland you abolished some seventy distilleries which were wiped out in Ireland. You weighed down other industries in Ireland by increasing the tea and tobacco taxes; yet, when a few Exchange [illegible] up a protest against the shilling co[illegible] note, the right hon. Gentleman tre[illegible] in his boots and withdrew it. I tell [illegible] that that is an additional injustic[illegible] Ireland. [Laughter.] Was it not a[illegible] an injustice? Would not that shi[illegible] have been chiefly paid by English[illegible] Is not the commerce of the country m[illegible] done in England? Have you not [illegible] lieved Englishmen of this tax, and [illegible] *tanto* increased the taxation in Irela[illegible] I have never suggested for a mo[illegible] that the right hon. Gentleman had [illegible] some sympathy with Ireland. I [illegible] said that to him before now. I [illegible] observed from the tone and demeanour [illegible] the right hon. Gentleman that he has [illegible] desire, if he could, to display [illegible] honourable amenity towards our country. We have founded our claim in Irela[illegible] on statute; but who made you t[illegible] interpreters of that statute? Have we ever said to the Government of Great Britain "Be you the interpreters of that statute!" Has Ireland ever had any chance [illegible] putting her views—except in course [illegible] argument—before an impartial tribun[illegible] and having them debated and decide[illegible] upon by such tribunal? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer makes himself judge in his own cause. Who made him the sole interpreter of the Treaty of Union? Is it because he is a member of the dominant nation, and the conquering country? Have we not as good a right to interpret the statute of Union as the right hon. Gentleman? Are our opinions to be set aside as naught, and are we to leave the matter to be decided by the gentlemen interested in shilling contract notes? And yet you boast of your great anxiety to keep faith with us! It appears that we would disgrace a Dublin Parliament. We are not wanted here, according to the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich. But what would it be in an Irish Parliament? You boast of your anxiety before Europe to keep faith with the nations, but here, in the simple matter of the exposition of a statute, there is no appeal to any legal decision. Is this great treaty between two great countries the only statute which is to have no legal interpretation? I can hale any man before the High Court of Justice in England or Ireland to recover sixpence; but where am I to apply for justice in the interpretation of the Treaty of Union? Is it to

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British Chancellor of the Exchequer? likely to interpret it in the favour of wn country or of Ireland? Suppose nd had entrusted itself as a ee to England; I could take before the Court of Chancery ask whether his trust had been pro- carried out. But when this question ts eight million pounds a year, and ts the property of five millions of le, apparently his view of British ice is that this treaty should find its interpretation with the Treasury in ning-street. First, you throw dirt on statute, and then the British Govern- t appoints a Royal Commission of ent Englishmen, or men in eminent ions of life, whom you fall down and ship. These gentlemen come to a lusion; but, no, you will not have verdict. Where, then, are we to justice? I would put it to any jury ide, or to any person who has studied national law, whether in a solemn er affecting two nations, one of the ies to that treaty, and that party e, should have its entire interpreta- The right hon. Gentleman said Ireland was prosperous. If we are perous, what have we to thank you The only monuments of English rnment in Ireland are gaols and work- es. You boast of having given us railways. Somebody said in Russia when you are expelled from India would leave nothing behind but rail- and empty soda-bottles. I do not ose that the total capitalised value of grants for light railways under the Act 893 exceeds a single year's taxa- And yet the right hon. Gentleman ks that because he has furnished light railways, he has discharged whole duty of Englishmen towards country. Then he went on to give a lerful list of what he calls proofs of great prosperity. First he talked t tenant right, and the large prices in Ireland for tenant right. No s are given in Ireland for tenant . People buy the houses on the s, which have been put up at a cost 200 or £300, and that is what the is paid for. It is not for the right of ing the land that they pay these bitant prices. Of course people live in houses, and houses will ys fetch their price. The next great nce of prosperity was the increasing income of the railways. I think the right hon. Gentleman would have done well not to have mentioned that. It is, unfortunately, the truth. But it is one of the great scandals of the country that you have permitted the railway companies to exact from the people of Ireland their large dividends through the high rates of carriage of Biddy's cow and straw. And yet you throw that into our teeth as a proof of our prosperity, instead of as a proof of the entire want of supervision of Irish railways. What is the other great instance of our prosperity? The increase in bank deposits. It is quite true, and I assume it must be so. Before banking became known to the people of Ireland, within the last fifty years, the British Government were not able to steal all our money —the small hoards of the people were kept in stockings; but when the knowledge of banking became popular, no doubt the people took their savings to the banks, and hence arose the increase in the deposits. But in my judgment, instead of that being a good sign, I think it is a very bad one. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] I think the very worst place for any man to have his money in is a bank. I can understand a man borrowing from a bank; but I can hardly imagine any sensible person being prepared to put his money in a bank at 1 per cent. when he can find more profitable investments; and it is because there is an absence of profitable investments in Ireland that the people put the money in the banks, and that these deposits have increased. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that there is a set-off in the exemptions and abatements in Ireland which make up to us the value of what the Act of Union supposed we should get. What are the exemptions we get? There is no tax in Ireland on armorial bearings. Well, there are eighty Irish Nationalist Members in this House, and I do not suppose there is an armorial bearing amongst them. I should like to know, therefore, what you would get by taxing our armorial bearings. Certainly there is no tax on body or men servants. Whom would that tax hit if you put it on? Just two or three—a few dukes and landlords. What I invite you to do is to put the tax on, and see what you will get from it. I know very well it would not pay the cost of collection. If it would pay the cost of collection it would be instantly

clapped on. I come to the income tax. Do Englishmen know that the mode of imposing income tax in Ireland is entirely different from that in England? In England a man's income tax is assessed by his neighbours, and each one of them knows that his neighbours in his own district will not be severe upon him. Who puts on the income tax in Ireland? A number of Englishmen are sent over from Downing Street, and by means of a direct Government inquisition the tax is imposed. Why don't you abolish in England what is practically the jury system in regard to the system of taxation? It is because you dare not do it. And yet, although it is admitted that Ireland did not pay that tax at all before the Union, when you did levy it you did the best you could to impose it direct by means of a Treasury clerk. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman's case is that he is really not a tax-gatherer at all, but a philanthropist. Whisky injures the coats of our stomachs; tea gives us indigestion; and coffee leads to sleepless nights in thinking about the British Government. But if the right hon. Gentleman is to be allowed to pose in this fashion as a philanthropist, why does he not take the true remedy and prevent the introduction of tea and coffee, the manufacture of whisky in the country, and the importation and manufacture of beer? Then I could understand the right hon. Gentleman as a philanthropist. Is his position, "We do not want to levy any taxes on the Irish people. They fight very well at times; they provide us with soldiers and generals of some mark, and for the sake of making Ireland a preserve of soldiers and generals we shall keep out of the country these noxious compounds"? We know very well that if we do not drink whisky, or beer, or tea, you would tax potatoes and salt. Is it not perfectly idle to raise, at this time of day, these sophistical pretensions? Then, we are asked to make suggestions. How often have our suggestions been taken? I say taxation on iron; we do not produce any iron. That was not adopted. Put a tax on coals; we scarcely raise any coal, but if there is little of that fuel in the country you can fall back on peat. It would be equally fair. It makes no difference whatever, once it has passed into the Statute Book. The right hon. Gentleman, I suppose, will pretend that we have no grievances. Well, Sir, really what is the true state of the case? The right h[illegible] Gentleman says he is delighted to [illegible] founding ourselves on the Act of U[illegible] We are obliged to do so; if the A[illegible] Union did not exist, we would n[illegible] here. I hope the right hon. Gent[illegible] will be equally delighted when he [illegible] to consider the question of Irish r[illegible]sentation in this House. Not th[illegible] myself set any great value on the r[illegible]sentation of Ireland in this Hous[illegible] sometimes think that most of us w[illegible] be almost as effective in a lunatic as[illegible] We are like the poor man married t[illegible] spendthrift wife. You lead this g[illegible] Empire into adventures, now [illegible] Russia, now with France, now in h[illegible] now in South Africa, and drag us in y[illegible] wake. We do not want to join in t[illegible] adventures. We find them very co[illegible] not only in money but in men. And [illegible] we are asked what our grievance is. [illegible] say it is that small, poor Ireland is a[illegible]ciated in the same fiscal system w[illegible] great and powerful England. Why d[illegible] the right hon. Gentleman consider it [illegible] surprising thing that we poor people b[illegible]lieve we have a historic grievance as w[illegible] as a fiscal grievance, and that we sh[illegible] come to this House demanding justic[illegible] That is the position we accept. I wou[illegible] invite him to read something about o[illegible] country. Ireland has a past, although the right hon. Gentleman does not se[illegible] to think that it has a past. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, on occasions of this kind, to give us some forbearance, and to arrest for a moment even the discussion of a Water Bill. The conviction has been forced on me by considerable experience that to the English mind the smallest and minutest English grievance is a vital matter; but it is a nuisance for Irish wild men of the woods, or rapparees, to come here and ventilate their grievances, when you want to be talking about China or Pretoria. It seems to me that on these occasions Ireland is regarded as some clamorous beggar knocking at a rich man's door, and that he gets more kicks than halfpence. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us that we have no grievance, that we are all wrong, that our country is all wrong, that he will make no concession, that the fiscal system of England is perfect, and whether we like it or not we have got to stifle our hopes for the future. That is the position. I am glad to say, however,

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I see at times some hon. Gentlemen these benches have some faint glimings of reason in dealing with us. y ponder over the time when there be some necessity of welding to-her the various parts of the Empire, I strongly urge upon them to give re time, attention, and care to the ts of Ireland.

MR. LOUGH: The Chancellor of Exchequer stated that out of fourteen millions of the new ation proposed in his Budget, eight llions would be income tax, or 60 per nt. The inference of the right hon. entleman was that Ireland was not grieved, because 60 per cent. of the new xation would be direct taxation. I ant to challenge the truth of that sugestion. The imposition of the tea duty lone in Ireland will raise as much evenue as the additional income tax; nd in addition to that there are the obacco, beer, and spirit duties. If we work it out, not more than 30 per cent. of the new taxation in Ireland would be raised by direct taxation, as against 60 per cent. in England. The Chancellor of the Exchequer always tries to juggle Irishmen with figures taken from Great Britain. I maintain that direct taxation in Ireland is just as grievous a burden on Ireland as indirect taxation. Income tax is one of the three great direct taxes, the others being the death duties and the stamp duties. Now, these are taxes on wealth, which were imposed in this country in connection with Free Trade legislation, and were admirably suited to a commercial country. They are, however, totally unsuited to an agricultural country, and none of them existed in Great Britain when this country depended on agriculture. These taxes, therefore, are not suited to Ireland, because Ireland is an agricultural and not a commercial country. I remember when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire spoke on this question he made a speech as inadequate to the occasion as the position taken up by the First Lord of the Treasury. He said he accepted the findings of the Royal Commission, but how did he propose to carry them out? By reducing indirect taxation, which would bring no relief whatever to Ireland. No responsible Government acquainted with the conditions would impose such taxation on a country where wealth was diminishing, where capital was scarce and where rich men were few. All these conditions exist in Ireland. It may not appear to be my place to defend the rich class in Ireland, but I believe that Ireland is suffering to-day quite as much from the cruel way in which the rich have been stamped out throughout the country as it is suffering from the hard conditions under which the poor live. I was talking the other day to an hon. Member who lives in Ireland about the approaching visit to the Queen. He has a house in the south of Ireland, and I asked him whether he thought the Queen was likely to go south during her visit. He replied that he thought not, because there was no house south of Dublin in which the Sovereign could be suitably entertained. There was once a time when in every county in Ireland there were a dozen houses in which the Sovereign could be entertained. Why are they not there now? Because the rich have been stamped out and treated just as cruelly in Ireland as the poor. The rich would give employment, and I say your fiscal system has done very bad work in Ireland by the injustice it has inflicted on the rich just as it has pressed hardly on the poor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the bulk of the indirect taxation in Ireland is on drink, and he asked was there any hon. Member who would suggest that the drink tax, "especially the tax on whisky" should be reduced. I suggest it. The greatest calamity has fallen on Ireland in regard to the consumption of intoxicating liquor since these high taxes have been imposed. They have not developed the moral welfare of the people; on the contrary. What are the facts? Take the tax on spirits. In 1853 it was 2s. 8d. per gallon; seven years afterwards it was 10s. What happened with regard to drunkenness in Ireland during the period of these high taxes? I will just give the House the figures. In 1842 the population of Ireland was 8,200,000, and there were 13,000 public-houses; to-day there is only a population of four and a half millions, but there are 18,000 public-houses. The population has fallen about 45 per cent., and the number of houses has increased by 45 per cent. That proves that your high duties have not diminished drunkenness. I believe they have stimulated it. I expressed that opinion once

before in this House, and was chaffed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, who alluded to my speech as advocating the saving grace of cheap whisky. We had cheap whisky in Ireland, and in that period we had Father Matthew, the greatest temperance reformer Ireland has ever seen, and who worked the greatest revolution that the country has ever experienced. At that period, when the tax was only 2s. 8d., it was he who stamped out distilleries, reduced the breweries, and decreased the number of public-houses by 50 per cent. In the county in which I stay when in Ireland the population in 1880 was 120,000 and the number of public-houses was 330; to-day the population has fallen to 100,000 and the number of public-houses has increased to 380, and the Report of the Licensing Commission stated that these houses are the worst drinking houses in any civilised country, and it recommended that their licences should be withdrawn in five years. The Report also says that the quality of the liquor is the worst supplied to human beings in any country. You allow that liquor to be sold, and you get 10s. a gallon on whisky which is only one year old. You are interested in maintaining this infamous traffic.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is not in order to say that hon. Members are interested in an infamous traffic. Moreover, the hon. Member should address himself to the Chair.

MR. LOUGH: Forgive me, Sir, if I have been carried away. Nothing is further from my thoughts than to make any personal reflection. My point was that when the tax is high the Government are interested in maintaining the traffic. These high duties will not diminish drunkenness. I was greatly interested in the speech of the hon. Member for Partick, the second sympathetic speech he has delivered in this House with regard to Ireland. He said that he would like to see railways nationalised and industries developed in Ireland. I would thoroughly welcome any scheme in that direction, though I am not as hopeful as the hon. Gentleman. One point in his argument goes to the root of this whole question between Ireland and Great Britain. He was stating the views of Pitt with regard to the proportion of taxation Ireland should pay, and he quoted from a speech in which Pitt said that the moment the debt of Ireland brought to a certain proportion to debt of Great Britain equal taxa should be established. That was not opinion of Pitt. He said that when finances of both countries were in a cer proportion with regard to first the d secondly the different stages civilisation and commerce, and thi the difference in wealth of the two tions, equal taxation would be rend possible. These were the fundam words used by Pitt, and his argu was that when these three condi were brought into a certain propo equal taxation might be establi When the Chancellor of the Exche and I think also the First Lord o Treasury, refer to the clause in the of Union, they always pass lightly the point that it was fixed that Ir should pay two seventeenths of the amount paid by the United King That meant that Ireland should p per head for every £3 10s. per head by the inhabitants of Great Britain. was the arrangement made by Pitt i Act of Union, and it was to remain the commerce and wealth of the nations came into a certain propo What has taken place since then 1860, instead of the proportion of £3 10s. per head we had £1 to £2 now Ireland pays £1 for every £1 6s per head in Great Britain, the effo the Treasury being to make Ireland Great Britain pay alike. Instead o tendency of affairs being in the dir laid down in Pitt's conditions, matte far worse than they were. When stated these opinions the populati Ireland as regards England was as o two, now it is as one to eight; the c of Ireland then stood to the capit Great Britain as one to three; now as one to thirty, and instead of facts justifying equal taxation they gest that there should be even a gr difference made now than was mad 1800, when Pitt arranged the Union. members are struggling for the recogn of the fact that Ireland cannot pa head as much as Great Britain. U the Act of Union the conditions down by Pitt as precedent to any for equal taxation have never been rea I regret that interest in this questio fallen away; this is not the first that Englishmen have been slow to a arguments brought forward in respe

land, but the decrease of population and the increase of pauperism in Ireland are grave facts. I noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not again refer to the question of the growth of pauperism; it is a most serious element in the case. I believe we are drifting towards another famine, and that the condition of affairs in Ireland is much worse than Englishmen imagine. I think it is a great pity that the First Lord of the Treasury has not been able to give a little more thought to this matter. I know he has a sincere interest in Ireland, but these continual impositions of new burdens, considering the decrease of wealth and population, form one of the most formidable evils which have existed in any country, and, so far as I am concerned, I will heartily support the motion.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I have no intention of inflicting a speech on the House or of reiterating the arguments which have been already used, but as a member of the executive of the Financial Reform League, it appears to me that the Leader of the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer altogether misinterpret the extent of the volume of public opinion in Ireland against this taxation. Some of the leading aristocrats in Ireland and some of the leading Unionists, although they may differ politically, are united with us in this demand against the increase of taxation, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks there is only a languid desire on the part of the Irish people with respect to this question he is entirely mistaken. I may tell him that unless this question is grappled with in a fair spirit, steps may be taken by some of the leading members of the Irish Financial Reform League to bring matters to a crisis by a combination to endeavour to stop the payment of taxes. I myself have advocated that course, and if there was a general strike against the payment of taxes in Ireland it would be a very serious thing for the British Government. I am not prepared to say that that is the opinion of the majority of the members of the League, but I am prepared to say that if things are not remedied, it is quite possible that such a course may be taken by a certain number of men who have the courage to take that course and test public opinion on this subject. We are often taunted with having one opinion on the hillsides in Ireland and another opinion in this House, but I have the courage of my convictions, and I would say nothing stronger in Ireland than I would be prepared to say in this House. What are the facts with regard to this question? I find that when the Queen came to the throne the total amount of the taxation of Ireland was £5,175,000, the number of inhabitants was 8,024,000, and the taxation per head was 12s. 11d.; in 1897 the taxation had increased to £8,148,000, the number of inhabitants had decreased to 4,475,000 and the taxation per head was £1 15s. 10d. I hold that the first duty of a Government is the safety of the people, and it apparently is the rule of the British Government in Ireland that as the population decreases the taxation is increased; but I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that this subject will not be allowed to rest until the taxation of Ireland is readjusted. An Irish poet once wrote,

> "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

I think we may now say that our country is one where wealth diminishes and men decay. Our population is decreasing, our capital is decreasing, our commerce is decreasing, and yet notwithstanding all that, when we come to the British House of Commons with a plea for justice founded on the Act of Union, Unionists from England refuse to co-operate with Unionists from Ireland for the readjustment of our taxation. I doubt if the claim of Ireland will receive much consideration from the First Lord of the Treasury or from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But undoubtedly the policy which I am advocating will be followed out in Ireland unless we are met in a spirit of justice and fair play.

Question put.

The House divided. Before the result was announced—

MR. LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): May I explain that by a mistake I voted in the wrong lobby? I intended to vote in the "No" lobby, and by mistake I voted in the "Aye" lobby.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member having voted, it cannot be altered now.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I should like to say that I was in a similar unfortunate position.

The numbers were:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 220. (Division List No. 76).

AYES.

Abraham William (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, Wm. (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carew, James Laurence
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Clancy, John Joseph
Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Emmott, Alfred
Engledew, Charles John
Farrell, Jas. P. (Cavan, W.)
Farrell, Thos. J. (Kerry, S.)
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gibney, James
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harrington, Timothy
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Horniman, Frederick John
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kilbride, Denis
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M A (Queen'. C
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim)
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Maddison, Fred.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Middlemore, John T.
Minch, Matthew
Molloy, Bernard C.
Moore, A. (Londonderry)
Morris, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cav
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilk
O'Connor, Arthur (Don
O'Connor, James (Wicklo
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpo
O'Dowd, John
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Redmond, W. (Clare)
Rentoul, James Alexander
Roberts, J. B. (Eifion)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tr
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Steadman, William Charle
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeat
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Ure, Alexander
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Wilson, John (Durham, Mi
Woods, Samuel
Young, S. (Cavan, East)
TELLERS FOR THE AYE-
Sir Thomas Esmonde a
Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chath'm
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederi
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Ele
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbu
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm
Hardy, Laurence
Hare Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horne
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert T.
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstea
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich
Hobhouse, Henry
Hozier, Hon. James H. Ce
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Mer
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. Willia
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry

, Lees
Alfred
e, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
:e, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
John Grant (Yorks.)
Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'lnd
ennett, Henry Currie
d, Lt.-Col. A. R.
erald Walter E.
l. C. W. (Evesham)
.Hn. Walter (Liverp'l)
, John Brownlee
John
rchie Kirkman
adwell, William
n, Hon. Alfred
ey, W. G. Ellison
, John Cumming
r, Charles (Liverpool)
ont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
Sir Lewis (Edir.b'gh, W
, James
, Ian
Sir John Blundell
Richard Biddulph
Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Colonel (Lancashire)
, Beresford Valentine
Thompson, Sir H. M.
dward Robert Pacy
. Jasper (Shropshire)
George Herbert
, Walter
Arthur H. A. (Deptfrd
y, Sir Robert Gray C.
Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
te, Francis Alexander
n, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman. Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James P. (Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strachey, Edward
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Ta'nt'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph P.- (Birm.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

LIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

the third time, and passed.

ENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

read, for resuming the adjourned on Question [19th March], "That be now read a second time."

ion again proposed.

ead a second time, and committed day next.

ABLE LOANS (IRELAND) BILL.

a second time, and committed for next.

ACY BOARD (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES, &c.].

ution reported, "That it is expe- amend the law relating to the of the staff of the General Board nissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, authorise the payment, out of to be provided by Parliament, of aries, and of the expenses of the and the remuneration of the n and Commissioners."

ution read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire) asked if the Lord Advocate would kindly explain the purposes of the resolution.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I have already done so, but I will explain again. The Bill is purely a Treasury Bill. According to the scale usually paid the present officials of the Lunacy Board are much underpaid, and the Bill simply allows the Treasury to fix the salaries of the secretary and the staff. There is also power to made a small payment for extra services rendered by the unpaid Commissioners.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said he differed from the Lord Advocate with regard to the object of the resolution. The great object of the resolution was to provide salaries for certain Commissioners who at the present moment were by Act of Parliament declared to be unpaid. There were in Scotland two Commissioners of Lunacy at

£1,200 a year, and two Deputy Commissioners at £600 a year each. England, with seven times the work, had only six paid Commissioners, and Ireland had only two. It was now proposed to pay the chairman of the Board in Scotland, although hitherto his duties had been discharged in the public interest without fee or reward. They were now asked to pay a salary to a man who only gave partial attention to the business, and to establish the principle that a man who discharged a public duty should be paid. That would apply to County Councillors and Members of Parliament. Hitherto the work had been done gratuitously, and now the Chairman of the Board, who was a nephew of the Secretary for Scotland, was to be paid. Why should he receive a salary when hitherto the work had been done gratuitously? That was the object of the resolution: the other objects mentioned by the Lord Advocate were merely makeshifts. He would oppose the Bill at every stage, and would denounce as an act of jobbery on the part of the Secretary for Scotland the payment of a salary to his nephew for work which had always been done gratuitously. He did not, however, intend to trouble the House with a division now.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The hon. Gentleman is quite wrong. There is no power to give a salary in respect of the unpaid Commissioners.

MR. CALDWELL said it was called not salary, but remuneration in the resolution.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) said under the circumstances he felt it his duty to divide the House, because the Irish Members had not received fair treatment in their demand for the readjustment of the taxation of Ireland. He felt that the resolution should not be passed, and he hoped hon. Gentlemen from Ireland would oppose it.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 115; Noes, 38. (Division List No. 77.)

AYES.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh'
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chelsea, Viscount
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chath'm
Denny, Colonel
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edwd.
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Knowles, Lees
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W)
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Penn, John
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomas
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sidebothom, J. W. (Cheshire)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, W. E. Murray
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Wor'shire, N.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Burns, John
Channing, Francis Allston
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duckworth, James
Farrell, Jas. P. (Cavan, W.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'l nd
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Killop, James
Murnaghan, George
O'Dowd, John
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
Power, Patrick Joseph
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Redmond, William (Clare)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Ure, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Daly and Mr. Caldwell.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther.

LUNACY BOARD (SCOTLAND) (SALARIES, ETC.) BILL.

"To amend the law relating to the number and salaries of the Staff of the General Board of Commissioners in Lunacy for Scotland, and to provide for the remuneration of certain of the Commissioners," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 140.]

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I object.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I understood that the principle of this Bill had been accepted in all parts of the House, and that it was really a measure for consideration in Committee.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) appealed to the hon. Member for Preston not to press his objection.

MR. TOMLINSON said he had not the slightest wish to prevent the Bill passing, but he considered it should be discussed on the Second Reading.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he hoped the Government would take note of the fact that it was the railway directors, not the Irish Members, who objected.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

MIDWIVES [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk, in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of midwives, and to regulate their practice." —(*Sir John Gorst.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY said that this was the first occasion on which a Private Member's Bill had been starred for Committee. The Bill had to go before the Committee on Law. On the London University Bill he took the point that it could not go to the Grand Committee until the Committee stage was obtained in the House, but he was overruled by the then Chairman, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North East Manchester, who said that it was possible for the Bill to go to the Grand Committee, although the Committee stage had not been taken in the House. That being so, it was a strange alteration in procedure to star a Private Member's Bill and to assume that the Grand Committee on Law would pass it in a shape which would require the money the Committee was asked to vote. That appeared to him to be an extremely novel procedure, and he knew of no precedent for it. He was loath in any way to prevent the passage of the Bill, but in view of the ruling to which he had referred he would respectfully ask that the stage they were now asked to take should be postponed until the Bill had passed the Grand Committee on Law. He would, if necessary, move to report progress.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): I hope the hon. and learned Member will not move to report progress,

as this is merely a formal stage. Certain small, trifling expenses may be incurred in connection with the Bill, and the private Members who are in charge of it cannot, as the hon. and learned Member knows, move such a clause, and I merely move it now in pursuance of an agreement which has been come to. The propriety of this particular clause can be discussed in the Grand Committee and again in this House.

MR. T. M. HEALY said if there was a general agreement he certainly would not offer any needless opposition, but he thought the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman was not valid. If the course proposed were necessary now, the ruling given in the case of the London University Bill was entirely wrong. The Grand Committee had not yet met, and the argument might be used when the Bill came up for consideration that the Committee of the whole House had already cheerfully voted the expenses connected with it. He thought the Committee was prejudging the matter.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) said he thought that it would be a very bad precedent ——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Do I understand that the hon. Gentleman objects to the proceedings of this Committee?

MR. DALY: Yes, Sir.

Committee report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

COAL MINES (PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR UNDERGROUND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that a fortnight ago he mentioned in the House that the private Members who had some reason to object to the Bill had withdrawn their objection. He had asked the Government to state from the reports of the Home Office inspectors what would be the effect of the Bill, and for a Return showing the number of children that would be affected by it.

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): I object.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that all the other Members who were interested were agreed, but if the opposition of the hon. Gentleman were persisted in he thought it would be useless to trouble the House with the Bill further.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) appealed to the hon. Gentleman to withdraw his objection.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The Government have no objection to offer to this Bill. We have had no statistics since 1887, and at that time the number of children who would be affected was just over 4,000. It is supposed since that time that in consequence of the disinclination of mine owners to employ children under thirteen, the number has been considerably diminished, and it is now believed to be about 3,000.

SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE: I consider this question ought to be discussed more thoroughly, and I object.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday next.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. GRANT LAWSON in the Chair.

DR. TANNER moved to report progress.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) appealed to the hon. Gentleman not to insist on his objection, as the Bill only extended to England rights which were already exercised in Ireland.

DR. TANNER withdrew his objection.

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 agreed to.

Clause 4:

LORD BALCARRES moved to report progress, as the Local Government Board desired to have the clause amended.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Tuesday next.

Adjourned at a quarter before One of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 23rd March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

EWPORT CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

GOVERNMENTS STOCK AND OTHER SECURITIES INVESTMENT COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

SOUTHAMPTON HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported with Amendments.

CRYSTAL PALACE COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

BOURNEMOUTH CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

HAMMOND (G. H.) COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to order).

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

MOTHERWELL WATER BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived; and Report of amendments to be received on Monday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

Leave given to the Select Committee to report from time to time: First Report made; to be printed; and to be considered on Tuesday next. (No. 37.)

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 15th March, 1900, declaring that Margaret Jones, sub-postmistress, Ruthin, Post Office Department, was appointed without a civil service certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the head of her department: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BRIDLINGTON PIERS AND HARBOUR.

Abstract of the general annual account for the year ending 26th July, 1899: Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Petition that a Select Committee may be appointed to inquire into the question of municipal trading; of London Chamber of Commerce; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next (The Marquess of Salisbury); and standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with. (No. 36.)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.].

(COMMITTEE.)

House in Committee (according to order).

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3:—

*LORD HARRIS: This clause proposes to give the library authority power to make bye-laws. The Local Government Board think it inadvisable to make new offences which can be dealt with under bye-laws, and that as regards the opening and closing of museums it is quite enough for the authority to have the power which they now possess for making regulations rather than bye-laws for this purpose. With regard to the conduct of persons frequenting public libraries, the Local Government Board point out that the Libraries Offences Act, 1898, already makes misbehaviour in a public library an offence punishable on summary conviction. In their opinion, therefore, it is

superfluous now to provide for bye-laws for regulating the conduct of persons frequenting public libraries and museums. They suggest that it is already provided for in a Statute.

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 24, to leave out from ('the') in line 24 to the second 'and') in line 25."—(*Lord Harris.*)

LORD WINDSOR: My object was to obtain something more definite than regulations. The difficulty was that regulations might be made, but that there was no power to enforce them. However, if the Local Government Board think it is objectionable to make bye-laws for this purpose, I accept the Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

*LORD HARRIS: Sub-clause (*b*) enables the officers and servants of the library authority and constables to exclude or remove from the library idle or disorderly persons, and persons not using the same for the purposes for which it is intended, or having been guilty therein of a breach of any bye-law relating thereto. The Home Office have asked the Local Government Board to specially watch this sub-clause, and, if possible, to get it excluded from the Bill. They think it inadvisable and also superfluous, having regard to the fact that under the Libraries Offences Act, 1898, power has been given for the punishment of persons on summary conviction for misbehaviour in public libraries, to insert this sub clause. I have been in communication with my noble friend, and I believe that he agrees to my Amendment, and proposes to substitute another sub-clause which he has read to me, and to which I have no objection.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out sub-section (*b*)"—(*Lord Harris.*)

LORD WINDSOR: The new sub-section which I shall propose in lieu of the one the noble Lord has moved to omit will run as follows—

"(b) For enabling the officers and servants of the library authority to exclude or remove therefrom persons committing any offence against the Libraries Offences Act, 1898, or against the bye-laws."

Lord Harris.

*LORD HARRIS: I think the ne section would come in better aft tion 3.

Amendment agreed to.

LORD WINDSOR: May I mo new sub-section (b) to-day, and con cate with my noble friend betwee and the next stage of the Bill as best place in which to insert it?

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMI (The Earl of MORLEY): I think it be better to have the new sub- printed.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed t

LORD WINDSOR: I should give notice that it is my inten move the insertion of a fresh cla which, I believe, my noble friend objection. It will be a clause siderable importance, and will h effect of making the Libraries (Act, 1898, apply not only, as it do to libraries, but to museums, art g and schools provided under the Libraries Acts.

Clauses 4 and 5, agreed to.

Clause 6, agreed to, with Amendment.

Clauses 7, 8, and 9, agreed to.

Clause 10.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRA I am sorry to intrude on the Ho inevitable Irish grievance, but in to public libraries we stand in Ire a very much worse position than th classes do in England. The last tion on the subject was passed i previous to the Irish Local Gove Act. The Irish Act of 1894 wa on a Report of a Committee of the of Commons, who considered the The desire of the promoters was t lines of the English Act of 1892 be followed in Ireland, but unfort that was found to be impossible in quence of complications as regards local authorities, rating powers, forth, and also as regards the suffr local government purposes in I These unfavourable conditions hav

en swept away by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and I therefore submit that we in Ireland should not remain under this disadvantage any longer, and that something should be done to enable public libraries to be started in the country districts. This is the object of my Amendment, and I hope it will meet with favourable consideration from the noble Lord opposite, and also from the noble and learned Lord the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 40, at the beginning of the clause, to insert as a separate sub-section:—(1). The provisions of the Public Libraries Act, 1892, shall extend to Ireland, with the substitution of the rural district as library district in place of the parish, and of the rural district council as library authority in place of the overseers for the parish."—(*Lord Monteagle of Brandon.*)

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, I quite appreciate the sympathy my noble friend takes in this question, and the desire he evidences to extend the benefits of the Libraries Acts as widely as possible in Ireland, where the love of literature is cherished, but I think the disadvantages of Ireland are rather more apparent than real. It is quite true that there have been separate Acts of Parliament in relation to this matter as regards England and Ireland. In Ireland we have the Act of 1855, and another Act, passed as recently as 1894, bringing it up to date. A Committee sat with reference to the latter Act, when similar proposals to those which are embodied in the Amendment of my noble friend were brought before the House of Commons. But although an effort was made to carry the benefits of the Libraries Acts into the small rural districts, the Committee of the House of Commons, on which Irish Members were largely represented, did not see their way to recommend the proposals then submitted. It was indicated that regard must be had to the question of rating for the purposes of libraries, and to the fact that the rate could not exceed a penny in the £, and that it might happen, if the Act was extended to all rural communities, as now sought by my noble friend, that it would be adopted by communities who would not be able to show a rateable valuation adequate to the support of a library. If it were deemed desirable to adopt the principle of extension, it would, therefore, be necessary to discriminate how far that extension could with advantage be carried, and also to consider the experience of the use of powers under existing legislation. If my noble friend could show that existing legislation had been availed of in Ireland and the powers under it exercised, then he would have an argument to show why a procedure should be adopted to widen the area and take in communities now excluded. But what are the facts? There are something like 129 towns in Ireland to which the Libraries Acts might be applied if the local governing authorities thought proper to apply them, but of those 129 towns not more than about twenty have availed themselves of the advantages of the Act. It would, therefore, seem that the advantages of the Act of 1894 are not at present sufficiently realised. I venture to think my noble friend might be satisfied with this discussion, and wait for further experience of the effect of existing legislation.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: I am sorry the noble and learned Lord cannot give me more encouragement. I think his argument, that because towns have not availed themselves of existing facilities country districts should not have those facilities, rather curious. The demand for the advantages of public libraries is more general in country districts than in towns, and I cannot conceive why they should not be allowed to avail themselves of the Libraries Act.

LORD WINDSOR: So far as this Bill is concerned, I should have no objection whatever to accepting the Amendment of my noble friend opposite, but after what has been said by the noble and learned Lord below me I do not suppose the noble Lord will press it.

Amendment (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

Clause 10 agreed to.

Clause 11—

LORD WINDSOR: In moving the Amendment next on the Paper, I hope, if these words are struck out, that the noble and learned Lord will not object to the rest of the sub-section.

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-Section 2, line 22, to leave out 'without the order of a judge in chambers being first obtained.'"—(*Lord Windsor.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I am happy to believe that legal procedure in this country is much more advanced and rapid than it used to be; but I doubt whether it is advisable to say that, in the event of an action not coming to an end in the time suggested, the right to institute proceedings against the library authority should be entirely destroyed. I am told that there is considerable objection to the clause elsewhere, and the noble Lord may imperil his Bill if he insists upon it. Personally, I should not be indisposed to accept a statutory limitation if definitely stated. Such limitations are not unusual. Under a Statute of James I., no person can bring an action for libellous or slanderous words more than twelve months after the speaking of the words, and I think it is not unreasonable that in such matters there should be a statutory limitation entirely different from that which applies to debts, etc. But I do not approve of the limitation of six months proposed in this clause. Though I shall not move the omission of the clause altogether, yet I think its scope must be enlarged and a longer period allowed between the giving of the notice and the time beyond which proceedings cannot be instituted. If the clause is not amended in the meantime, I shall move an Amendment when it gets to the Standing Committee.

LORD WINDSOR: I shall be very glad, in substitution for the term of six months, to put in any period which may be considered reasonable. I am glad that the noble and learned Lord does not move to strike out the clause, and if by any such Amendment in the Standing Committee his objections can be removed, I shall certainly endeavour to remove them.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 and 13 agreed to.

Schedule.

*LORD HARRIS: The effect of repealing so much of Section 2 of the Public Libraries (Amendment) Act, 1893, as relates to the consent of the urban authority would be to deprive the local authority of any word, for instance, on the matter of rating. Under the Act of 1892 the local voter had that power, but by the Public Libraries (Amendment) Act of 1893 the power was taken away from the voter and given to the urban authority, and unless my Amendment is adopted the local authority will be deprived of any voice in the matter.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, to leave out lines 29 and 30."—(*Lord Harris.*)

Agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 38.)

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª Monday next.

THE NEW EDUCATION CODE—GRANTS, INSPECTION, ETC.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the conditions of annual grants as laid down by the fourth chapter of the Code of Regulations for Day Schools in England, and to the increased powers conferred upon Her Majesty's inspectors. There is one feature in the new Code on which I beg to sincerely congratulate the noble Duke, the Lord President of the Council. I refer to Article 15, which introduces an entirely new principle in our education, and it does it in a manner with which, so far as the subjects are concerned which are put in the course of instruction for elementary schools, I am in hearty sympathy. In fact, Article 15 gives all I asked for in the statement I made in October to the London School Board. It gives as compulsory subjects English composition, and grammar, and history, and geography, which hitherto have only been included in the optional list. Furthermore, the Article sweeps away the distinction between class subjects and specific subjects, and gives greater latitude of selection in the arrangement of the curriculum for schools. It is quite evident that this Article has been included in the English Code in order to bring it

more into harmony with the Scotch Code, and I think I am justified in stating that, having assimilated the Codes in this respect, it would have been wiser to have added the guarantees which the Scotch Code gives, and which are not found in the English Code. In the first place, I regret not to find in the Code the inclusion of the merit certificate. The merit certificate is a guarantee that these courses of instruction when introduced will lead up to a certain goal, and, in addition, gives this further advantage, as was pointed out by my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland in his speech on Friday last, that you can substitute the merit certificate for the labour certificate. I do not see in this Code any course of instruction for advanced departments, and that is a very suspicious circumstance when I look at Article 13, which has been altered in a way which will make it much more difficult for schools—and what I am saying applies as well to Board schools as to Voluntary schools—to earn a grant in the advanced departments. Article 13 now precludes the recognition of attendance of those who are upwards of 14 years of age and have been under instruction for more than one year in Standard VII. Hitherto the article has left much greater latitude for the recognition of higher work. The limit of age in the Free Education Act is 15; in Scotland it is 18. Another very serious feature of the new Code is the increased power which has been given to inspectors. First of all, the inspector, under Article 15, *b.* ii., will have it in his power to prescribe which of the subjects included in the list, except two, may or may not be taken, and, in addition, he is given, under Article 101, *a.* ii., the power to disapprove of any portion of the syllabus which he considers unsuitable. This is a very important innovation; for not only will the inspector have the power to check the time-table and the scheme of instruction, but also the syllabus. Therefore, he will control not only the choice of subjects, but the methods of instruction. Everyone is aware that inspectors have very different ideas both as regards the subjects which ought to be included in the time-table, and as regards the methods of teaching. It is quite conceiveable, therefore, that a child migrating from one district of London to another might find the syllabus in the school to which he migrates, imposed by the inspector of the district, so entirely different from that prescribed for the school which he had left that he would find it difficult to follow the instruction there given. Hitherto the powers of inspectors have been by no means so wide as they are under the new Code, and unless the Education Department exercises a very strict control over the manner in which these powers are used, and gives very definite instructions to the inspectors, I fear there will be considerable friction in the future between the inspectors and the managers of schools. The new financial arrangements affect very seriously the most efficient schools. I think I can state the case most clearly in this way. A really efficient school hitherto could earn 22s. 3d. per boy, and, in addition, 5s. for specific subjects in the higher standards. In future, the 5s. cannot be earned at all, and the maximum amount that can be earned in that school will be 22s. Now take the case of an inferior school. In an inferior school hitherto the minimum that could be earned was 15s. The new minimum is 21s., a difference of 6s. This alteration is all to the advantage of the inferior school, and to the disadvantage of the higher school. There can be no objection if the new grant is to be given to these inferior schools on the understanding that they will improve their course of instruction and their teaching staff; but I admit that I do not find in the Code any guarantees for such a sanguine expectation, and the wording of a clause in Article 101 seems rather to point to the wish of the Department that the inspector should propose the higher grant in all except the worst cases. Here, again, I wish the provisions of the Scotch Code had been adopted. The system is much more logical in Scotland, where there is a normal grant, with an increase for a school of special excellence and a reduction for a school which is below the average efficiency. But, in any case, it is deplorable, and I cannot express too strongly my regret, that the loss should accrue to schools on which the managers have spent the greatest care, and which have given the best results. If I take the return of last year I find that the grant for infant and senior departments amounted to £4,385,460. The grant, based on the attendance of last year and taking 22s. as the figure, with a maximum for infants of 17s., would amount to

£4,677,808—an increase of close upon £300,000. I strongly suspect that when the results of this Code are given in the next Report we shall find that very little of this additional sum has been distributed among the most efficient schools, and that the bulk of it will go to the schools which represent the least educational effort. A comparison with the grants under the Scotch Code is still more damaging. There infants can receive 18s. 6d. as against 17s. 6d. in England, and scholars from ten till the merit certificate 24s. 6d., as against 22s. in England. In Scotland you give to the advanced departments to scholars having the merit certificate a maximum grant of 55s. and 12s. 6d. for experimental science, as against 22s. in England; and in Scotland this grant can be earned up to the age of eighteen. There is another alteration in the grant which will affect the efficiency of the schools Hitherto the maximum grant to pupil teachers has been £12. In future it will be £6, and no account is taken of the qualifications of the pupil teacher. In Scotland the grant is retained at £12. I regret not finding in the Code any provision for securing a larger supply of competent qualified teachers. I know that the Department are quite aware of the necessity of making some such provision, but this occasion has not been taken to make it. I need hardly say that when I compare England with Scotland, I have no desire to complain of the predilection of the Treasury in this respect for Scotland, but I am bound to resent it on behalf of the educational interests of England; and if I am told that the conditions of Scotland and the history of education in Scotland are quite different from those in England then I must be allowed to remind the House of a passage which occurs in the Report of the Education Commission, over which the noble Viscount the Lord Privy Seal presided. The unfair treatment of England in the matter of elementary education, as compared with Scotland, was censured by the majority Report of Lord Cross's Commission (Part IV., cap. 5, p. 169) as follows—

"In Scotland liberal grants are now made to the managers of elementary schools for advanced instruction to scholars who have passed the highest standard, and we see no reason why English children should not be afforded like assistance for continuing their education. This arrangement would facilitate the provision of such higher instruction in the smaller and less populous school districts, and, for reasons already suggested, might be pro by the authorities of some even of the la districts to the establishment of sep schools."

The larger districts have done their d and in many parts of England there excellent higher grade schools which this Code, will undoubtedly be hit in matter of finance. In the Summary Conclusions and Recommendations Commissioners say (Part VII., p. No. 152) -

"That in certain cases the object of h elementary schools might be secured attaching to an ordinary elementary sch class or section in which higher instru was provided for scholars who had pass Seventh Standard; and that liberal g made as in Scotland to the manage elementary schools for advanced instruct scholars who have passed the highest sta would facilitate the provision of such h instruction in the smaller and less pop school district."

That was the opinion expressed Royal Commission as far back as and, twelve years later, instead of t a step in advance, the new Code i doubtedly, so far as the higher d ments are concerned, a retrograde mea I hope the noble Duke will give consideration to the complaints whic sure to reach him as to the disas effect which the Code will have in respect.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSH My Lords, my noble friend has ref several times in the course of his ob tions to the case of the Scotch Code compared it to the disadvantage o English Code in several particulars is scarcely necessary for me to poin that the cases of England and Sco are very far from being analogous Scotland the School Boards have doubtedly authority to give secon education, whereas in this country, a are advised, we have no such power. doubt we have no such power, an my noble friend is aware, the Go ment have under consideration, and to propose before very long, the mea which may be necessary to constitut authority which shall have legal auth to give secondary education, w no local authority can give at pre When that time comes it may be n sary to attempt to draw a distinct

between upper primary and secondary education which may involve the inclusion of upper primary education of something higher than the seventh standard, and it is possible we may be in a position to make some further advance in the direction of assimilating the English and the Scotch Codes. My noble friend also referred, in a tone of some complaint, to the additional powers which were given to the inspectors under the new Code. I need scarcely say that the proposed powers will be exercised under the control of and subject, if necessary, to appeal to the Education Department; and, although I believe that Her Majesty's inspectors are a body of men to whom very great responsibility in this matter may very safely be entrusted, I do not conceive that there has been the smallest intention to absolve the Department itself from any responsibility which properly rests upon it. The remainder of the observations of my noble friend were, I think, devoted to the substitution of the block grant for the elaborate and rather complicated system of variable grants which have hitherto been given to the elementary schools. I do not think that my noble friend will desire that I should enter into this question, in respect of its details, at any great length. The Code has very recently been published, and has not up to the present been very much discussed. The substitution of block grants for variable grants will not come into operation until the year 1901-1902, and although I feel tolerably confident that the principles that are laid down in this Code will commend themselves generally as educationally expedient, I should not like, until I have heard further discussion on the subject, to commit myself absolutely to the proposals which are contained in the Code. The provisions of the Code to which my noble friend has referred are going to be challenged in the other House next week, and it is probable that there the subject will be more fully discussed, and the experience and knowledge of managers and school teachers will be more fully brought to bear upon the question than could be the case in this House as at present constituted. And I am almost disposed to regret that my noble friend did not think it expedient to postpone his observations upon the Code until we have had an opportunity of hearing those fuller discussions that undoubtedly will take place before long in the other House and in the country. The question of this change in the system of making grants to elementary schools has, as the noble Lord is no doubt aware, been for a very long time under the consideration of the Department, and the officials of the Department who have had it under their consideration have come, I believe, almost unanimously to the conclusions which have now been embodied in the Code. A very considerable stimulus has, no doubt, lately been given in the direction of this change by the movement which has taken place on the part of Members for agricultural and rural constituencies and others, who have expressed a strong desire and instituted a kind of agitation for changes in the curriculum and system of our rural schools which would adapt the course of instruction given in them more fully to the wants of the class of children that attend those schools. In the course of this discussion it has been found that an almost indispensable preliminary was the substitution of something in the nature of a block grant for the variable grants which have prevailed, and when this question was under consideration in connection with rural schools it was found that no valid reason could be given why this system of block grants could be applied to rural districts only which did not apply to its adoption in connection with schools generally. The noble Lord has not challenged the expediency of this substitution, and therefore I do not think it necessary at the present moment to go into the reasons which have induced the Department, after a great deal of consideration, to adopt this course. It is undoubtedly the case that by the substitution of block grants for the present variable grants a certain number of schools that have hitherto been considered most efficient will be the losers, and those less efficient will become considerable gainers. That is a consequence necessarily inseparable from the substitution of a block grant for the variable grants, unless the Treasury could have been induced to assent—and we did not think we had a right to ask them to assent—to the fixing of the block grant at such a figure as would, while improving the position of the less efficient schools, have left the more efficient schools unaffected. This question depends very much on the point of view from which we look at the grant which is given by the State in aid of elementary education. If we look at that

grant as a fund by means of which certain localities, especially favoured by wealth, perhaps by energy and intelligence, are able by a large expenditure of their own to extract from the State the largest amount of aid for the instruction of a certain class of children in a certain class of subjects, then undoubtedly there are certain schools in certain localities which under the present Code will appear to suffer some injustice. If, on the other hand, as I think we ought rather to do, we look upon the Government grant in aid of elementary education as a fund out of which elementary instruction to the children of the nation as a whole is to be raised to the highest point of average efficiency, then I think it will be found that this substitution is not only expedient but also just. At all events, my Lords, it is a measure which has not been adopted without very careful consideration, and it is a measure which also has, so far as we are able at present to see, received no very inconsiderable amount of support. We have already received resolutions from the Agricultural Education Committee, and also from the National Union of Teachers, warmly approving of the step we have taken, and although no doubt there may be certain most admirably managed School Boards whose constituents will suffer to a certain extent pecuniarily from the change, I believe that when this question comes to be discussed, it will be found that, in the opinion of those who have the greatest opportunity of gaining experience and knowledge, the gain to the efficiency of education generally will be so great as to reconcile them to any temporary pecuniary sacrifice they may be called upon to make. I feel very little doubt that this matter will receive in the course of the present session both in this and the other House, and in the country generally, more attention than it has yet received. I can only thank my noble friend opposite for having given to your Lordships' House at this early stage, the benefit of his experience, and I can assure him that, so far as the questions have not been finally decided by the present Code, the suggestions he has made will receive most careful attention.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I entirely agree with the opening observations of the noble Duke to [illegible] effect that it would not be desirable [illegible] the whole matter has been more fully [illegible] sidered out of doors and in the [illegible] House, to attempt to enter upon the [illegible] important questions which are raised [illegible] the new code; and I welcome the [illegible] fair manner in which the noble Duke [illegible] treated the particular questions brought before the House by my noble friend [illegible] hind me. I do not feel that I am [illegible] ciently an expert to give any very decisive opinion as to what may be the effect of so important a change as that of making a block grant, but I do feel a certain amount of jealousy at the introduction of a system which, as the noble Duke admits, will be disadvantageous to the higher class of elementary schools. I do not think that because those who support these elementary schools have got ample funds and therefore have in that respect an advantage over other schools, they should be discouraged in the efforts which they make to raise to the highest point the standard of elementary schools, and to set thereby an example to the whole country of what may be done in that respect. I cannot help fearing that the new system may to some extent bolster up unsatisfactory and imperfect schools where there is little zeal for education, and discourage schools which are supported by people possessed of much greater zeal for this important task. It seems to me that the system will have to be tried in this way. If it has the effect of really raising the standard of efficiency in the schools of the country generally, that will, in itself, be a very signal advantage to be gained; but, unless a stronger pressure is put upon a very large number of schools—particularly voluntary schools and smaller Board schools to attain a greater efficiency, I shall be very much afraid that there will be no gain as regards general education in the country. One of the greatest difficulties still is the existence of a considerable number of schools where the education is far below the desired standard, and I fully admit the difficulty of putting stronger pressure on many of them. I had some experience of the difficulties when I was Lord President of the Council. There is very serious danger that many of these small schools will remain far below what they ought to be, and that

:ially the case in rural schools. I y hope that the whole question discussed from every point of nd if it should be found that the 'stem will work well, I, for my ıould congratulate the Educational ment on the step that has been I know that there is a not un- jealousy of the certain amount of education which is given in some superior Board schools, and I that, when we have an admirable of secondary education, such as it d we may have some day, placed the reach of the whole population :ountry, there will be no necessity t kind of higher education which g given in those schools. But r we may welcome the step which :en taken to improve secondary on, with the best intentions and :atest energy, it must be a very ne before a really efficient system ıdary education can be established country, and I should lament very f, during the interval, this *quasi-* :ry education which is given in the best of the Board schools was aged or diminished. That would 'ery severe blow to the general :s of the education of the country.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the Clock, to Monday next, Two of the Clock.

)USE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 23rd March, 1900.

ıIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

ıTE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

SPEAKER laid upon the Table from one of the Examiners of ıs for Private Bills, that, in the the following Bill, referred on the Reading thereof, Standing Order has been complied with, namely :—

David's Railway (Abandonment) ll.

red, that the Bill be read a second

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the first Reading thereof, no standing Orders applicable, namely:—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

GRANTHAM GAS BILL.

REDHILL GAS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME (PETERSHAM) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

SOUTHPORT WATER BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MARKET WEIGHTON DRAINAGE AND NAVIGATION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

READING CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Orkney, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dumfries, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Thornhill, against; to lie upon the Table.

MIDWIVES BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Logie Pert, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Mildenhall; and Andover; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL, AND SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Crockham Hill; Norwich; Salford; Pendleton; Moss Side; Edinburgh; Barnsley; and Otley; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Clydebank; and Scottish Band of Hope Union; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Bradford (two); Skegness; Salford; and Stratford; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forres, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (RECRUITING).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UGANDA RAILWAY ACT, 18

Account presented, showing the n issued from the Consolidated Fund u the provisions of the Uganda Ra Act, 1896 (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), a the money expended and borrowed Securities created under the said A 31st March, 1899; together wi Report of the Comptroller and A General thereon [by Act]; to lie up Table, and to be printed. [No. 10

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1

Copy presented, of Treasury M dated 15th March, 1900, declari Margaret Jones, Sub-Postmistress, Post Office Department, was ap without a Civil Service certificate, inadvertence on the part of the her Department [by Act]; to li the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (1878) AMENDMENT BIL

Order for Second Reading up nesday, 4th April, read and disc —Bill withdrawn.

STANDING COMMITTEES (C MEN'S PANEL).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR report the Chairmen's Panel, That th appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to Chairman of the Standing Commi the consideration of Bills relating and Courts of Justice and Lega dure, in respect to the Merchant S (Liability of Shipowners) Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR furtl ported, That they had appointed M Edward Ellis to act as Chairman Standing Committee for the consic of Bills relating to Trade (includir culture and Fishing), Shippin Manufactures, in respect to the men's Compensation Act (1897) Ex Bill.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING CO MITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from th mittee that they had added to the ing Committee on Law and Co Justice and Legal Procedure the fol fifteen Members in respect of th

nt Shipping (Liability of Shipowners) l:—Mr. William Allan (Gateshead), r. Bryce, Sir Charles Cayzer, Sir Donald rrie, Colonel Denny, Sir Francis Evans, r. Field, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Sir illiam Houldsworth, Sir John Leng, r. Charles M'Arthur, Mr. Platt-Higgins, r. Provand, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. avelock Wilson.

MR. HALSEY further reported from he Committee that they had added to he Standing Committee on Trade (in-luding Agriculture and Fishing), Ship-ing, and Manufactures, the following lfteen Members in respect of the Work-nen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill:—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Harry Foster, Mr. Goulding, Sir Cameron Gull, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Grant Lawson, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Runciman, Captain Sinclair, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Vaughan-Davies, Mr. Courtenay Warner, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Frederick Wilson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—PROVISIONING OF MAFEKING.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the statement that it was owing to the initiative taken by Messrs. Julius Weil and Company, Government contractors, or their agent, in storing at Mafeking a much larger stock of food supplies than that required by their contract, that the garrison and inhabitants of that town have been in a position to withstand the siege many weeks longer than they would otherwise have been able to do; whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the facts; and, if they be as stated, whether he will consider the propriety of suitably recognising the foresight of the person who, thus acting on his own responsibility, rendered possible the protracted defence of Mafeking. May I be permitted to add that I have heard since I put this question down that the initiative in this important matter was taken by a Member of this House?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have seen a report, which seems to be authentic, that the initiative to which the hon. Baronet refers was due to Lord Edward Cecil, now shut up in Mafeking. I have not had an opportunity of consulting him or the gallant officer commanding in Mafeking, and therefore I cannot give any information on the subject at present.

STORMBERG ENGAGEMENT—GENERAL GATACRE'S DESPATCH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what action, if any, the War Office intends to take, having regard to the strictures of Lord Roberts on the despatch of General Gatacre respecting the Stormberg reverse.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. G. WYNDHAM, Dover): No action is contemplated.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is no action contemplated, having regard——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The question has been answered.

SIEGE OF KIMBERLEY—MR. RHODES AND COLONEL KEKEWICH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any investigation is to be made into the differences between Mr. Rhodes and Colonel Kekewich during the siege of Kimberley; and, whether Mr. Rhodes acted under any authority in his alleged interference with Colonel Kekewich in the discharge of his duties as commander at Kimberley.

MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. Colonel Kekewich was the only person who had authority in regard to military dispositions for the defence of Kimberley, and I am not aware that that authority was questioned.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Were there, in fact, any differences between Mr. Rhodes and Colonel Kekewich?

[No answer was given.]

AFTER THE WAR—SETTLEMENT OF RETIRED SOLDIERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if any steps can be taken by the Govern-

ment to encourage the settlement of retired soldiers in South Africa after the war is ended.

*MR. WYNDHAM: It would, in the opinion of the Government, be premature to discuss this question at present.

INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state what number of British Indian subjects have been employed in the Indian Ambulance Corps from the date of its organisation in connection with the operations in South Africa, how many of them have been wounded and killed; if a full list of the persons so employed is kept; and whether in the case of their being wounded or killed, intimation thereof is duly conveyed to the Indian authorities and published for the information of their relatives and friends.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There is no nominal roll of such persons in this country. Approximately there are about 1,300 Indian subjects employed in connection with the campaign in South Africa, of whom the majority are employed with the Army Medical Department. Four have been killed and seven wounded. The Government of India is informed by the military authorities in South Africa of all casualties amongst the Indian contingent.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: Are names given in the reports?

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir.

EXPLOSIVE OR EXPANSIVE BULLETS.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether either explosive or expanding bullets have been sent to South Africa for the use of the troops there or for any other purpose.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The bullet in use in South Africa for the rifle is the Mark II. solid bullet. Mark V. bullets were recalled, and have never been used by the troops. Neither have any Dum-Dum bullets been used by the troops.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Is it not the fact that an enormous number of Mark IV., hollow-nosed, expanding bullets were sent out to the troops in South Africa?

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. I cannot be the fact. I think the Member knows the facts. The Mark bullet was the regulation bullet, an original garrison in South Africa but it was recalled, and it has never used in this campaign.

MR. DILLON: My question is wh as a matter of fact, many millions Mark IV. bullet were not in the ha the troops in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: They we called, without being used. That that they were placed in the magaz

MR. DILLON: But they we brought back to England?

*MR. WYNDHAM: That I a aware of.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, stoke): Have explosive bullets be by the Boers in this war?

[No answer was returned.]

COMMANDS AT THE FRONT-METHUEN AND COL. GOU

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I ask the Under Secretary of State f why is Colonel Gough, who was i mand of his regiment at Magers not still in command of his regi the front; is Colonel Gough's from the field owing to the ac Lord Methuen; and what are the stances that have led to the ten loss of the services of this distin officer.

MR. WYNDHAM: Colonel period of command expired on t March. His absence from the fie vious to that date was due to the of Lord Methuen. I informed the able Member yesterday that an would be held so soon as the ne witnesses are available.

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEME GENERAL WAUCHOPE AND METHUEN.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I ask the Under Secretary of State f whether Major General Waucho pressed any difference of opinion as scheme of the operations to be taken at the battle of Magers which, in obedience to the orders o Methuen, his commanding office endeavoured to carry out.

* See page 29 of this volume.

MR. WYNDHAM: Nothing is known which tends to confirm the suggestion put forward by the hon. Member. Lord Methuen states in his despatch that General Wauchope made no comment on the orders beyond replying that he understood them.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will Lord Methuen be asked the question I have now put?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LORD METHUEN'S DESPATCHES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether in the revised despatch of Lord Methuen, dated 15th February, any matters and incidents in relation to the battle of Magersfontein, which were the subject of previous informal communications by Lord Methuen, were omitted; and at whose suggestion were those omissions made, and on what grounds.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Lord Methuen's attention was directed by the Commander-in-Chief to the fact that his communication, as originally drafted, departed from the style and form prescribed for a despatch.

"A despatch (in the words of the Commander-in-Chief) should be a complete account, and should not contain reports from subordinate commanders or other documents. Paragraphs should be numbered, and all names of officers selected for praise should be in one paragraph, trivial details being omitted."

It was to the form and not to the substance of the despatch that exception was taken.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Will the hon. Gentleman relieve the feelings of the gallant Irishman in command of a Scotch regiment on that occasion by stating whether any reflection was conveyed against Colonel Downham in the first despatch?

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; none.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND—PROVISIONING OF THE CHANNEL SQUADRON.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that all necessary supplies can be procured in the South of Ireland, steps will be taken to provision the Channel Fleet during the present visit to Queenstown.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): All supplies of fresh meat, vegetables, and fresh bread required by the Fleet while in Irish waters are obtained locally, and this course will be followed in the case of the ships of the Channel Squadron.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can other provisions be included in this arrangement?

*MR. MACARTNEY; No, Sir; it is confined to fresh provisions which can be obtained fresh locally.

MILITIA—OFFICERS' GRATUITIES.

COMMANDER YOUNG (Berkshire, Wokingham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why reductions are made from the pay of officers of embodied regiments of Militia who have retired from the Army with a gratuity; and whether these officers of Militia will receive the bounty which has been promised to the other Militia officers when their regiments are disembodied.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reductions are made under Article 489 of the Pay Warrant for reasons which I have already explained to the House in my reply to a question put yesterday by the hon. Member for South-east Essex on behalf of my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Bath. In reply to the second paragraph the officer will be granted the ordinary gratuity on disembodiment unless his service entitles him to an addition to his original gratuity on retirement; in this case he will be allowed to choose whichever gratuity is more advantageous to him.

YEOMANRY CAMPS.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state on what day the Army Order relating to Yeomanry camps will be published.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The special Army Order was published yesterday.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will an order applying to Volunteer camps also be issued?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I must ask for notice of that.

* See page 35 of this volume.

ARMY CONTRACTS FOR BICYCLES.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Carlow, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the purchase of bicycles for Army use, consideration in giving orders will be had for bicycle manufacturers in Wexford, Dublin, and other parts of Ireland.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. Powell-Williams, Birmingham, S.): Yes, Sir. Any firms in Wexford able and willing to supply bicycles should apply to have their names placed on the War Office list.

CANTEEN CONTRACTS IN IRELAND.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if, on the 1st of the present month, a contract was given for the sole supply of ale, stout, porter, and whisky for the Army in Ireland to an English firm, and why these things are not purchased from Irish firms.

*MR. J. POWELL WILLIAMS: Nothing is known at the War Office of the matter to which the hon. Member refers, which is evidently a contract with a canteen.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the hon. Gentleman be good enough to make inquiries?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It is so clear that this is a canteen matter that no inquiry is needed. The managers of canteens conduct their own business, and the Secretary of State does not propose to interfere.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Cannot the Department see its way to recommend to the military authorities the advisability of placing the contracts with Irish firms?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Secretary of State thinks it advisable to leave the management of the canteens to those who benefit by it.

CORK MILITIA NON-PAYMENT OF BOUNTY.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg again to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office what is the cause of the delay in paying the bounty to which the men of the South Cork Militia (3rd Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers), recently called out for special service and discharged, are entitled in respect of service; and when the bounty will be paid.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I apologise for the delay in answering question. The cause of the delay in payment has been that, on the regiment proceeding abroad, all the regimental records accompanied it, and the addresses of the men who were then dismissed to their homes from Dover were not known to the officer by whom the bounty in question are payable. The addresses in some cases are being ascertained from other sources, and as fast as they become known the payments are made. The paid men should apply to Station Master, Tralee.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Has the Gentleman any explanation of the delay in answering the question?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It was, I believe, being made in order to find out if the regimental records had been left behind, but it appeared that they had gone on with the regiment.

INDIAN FAMINE—RELIEF WORKS AND FUNDS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India how many people in India are estimated to be suffering from famine in India; how many are engaged upon public works, and what is the total sum available to meet the distress in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The area affected by the distress in India contains a population of sixty-one millions. The number in receipt of relief is about five millions, of which 4,200,000 are employed upon public works. The sum devoted to direct relief in 1899-1900 was £2,055,000; in 1900-1 it is estimated that £3,300,000 will be required for this purpose. If more should be needed, the Government of India will provide it.

SUGGESTED FAMINE RELIEF GRANT FROM IMPERIAL SOURCES.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the sufferings caused by the famine in

to the fact that nearly five millions people are now on relief works, which nber must be largely increased before y, also to the fact that a number of tle have died, and that the peasants l need more generous relief to start m after the next rains, the Government will consider the advisability of aking a famine grant to India from perial sources.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The distress used in India does, I believe, both in ea and in intensity, exceed any visitation of recent years; but I am informed at the Indian Government, without esorting to further taxation, have funds ufficient to meet all the calls which are kely to be made upon them.

THE NEW STAMP DUTIES.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in framing the new clause in the Finance Act to replace the stamp duty, he will consider the advisability of adopting some scheme which will produce sufficient revenue to replace the sum now arising from the operation of Clause 25 of the Companies Act, 1867, in order to admit of the total repeal of that clause, and thus carry out the recommendation of the Committee on this subject.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The objects which the Departmental Committee of 1894 (to which I conclude the hon. Member refers) had in view in recommending the repeal of Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1867, have since been secured by the Companies Act, 1898, so that there is now no object to be gained by the repeal. The section does not itself impose any duty; it merely provides an important security against the evasion of existing stamp duties. There is really no connection between such a provision and any proposal that may be made for creating new stamp duty.

MR. CROMBIE: Is there not a revenue derived from the working of this clause notwithstanding the Act of 1898?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have endeavoured to explain to the hon. Member that the section to which he refers is an important security to prevent an avoidance of the revenue, and I should certainly object to its repeal.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899—ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, as the metropolitan vestries will cease to exist as municipal bodies on 31st October and the borough councils will come into existence on 1st November, it will be within the competence and will also be the duty of the existing vestries to make financial provision for the municipal services that will be required to be continued after 1st November; and, as any administrative changes that may be decided upon will take some time to formulate and carry into effect, whether any term has been fixed for which such provision should be made.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The first elections of the borough councillors under the London Government Act are to be held on the 1st day of November next, or on such later day as soon as practicable thereafter as may be fixed by the Lord President of the Council. The metropolitan vestries, therefore, will not necessarily cease to exist as municipal bodies on the 31st October. The local authorities who are charged with the duty of levying rates should make their rates at the usual time and for the usual period, and I am advised that it is within their competence to do so.

LONG EATON LEVEL CROSSING.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any reply from the Midland Railway Company in answer to his communication respecting the level crossing at Long Eaton, and whether any steps will be taken to render this crossing, which has been the subject of complaint from the local authority and has been condemned by a coroner's jury, less dangerous to the public.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir; I have received a reply from the company dated the 17th instant, in which the general manager points out

that the wickets and the carriage gates at this crossing are controlled and locked from the signal box, and that there is a footbridge for the use of pedestrians. It is added that the company are now engaged in widening their Erewash line and constructing new lines for goods and mineral trains, and that the completion of these works will have the effect of diverting from this crossing a large number of the trains at present passing over it on the level. In view of the altered circumstances which will then arise the directors state that they do not think themselves justified in incurring the heavy expense which would be involved in the provision of a subway as suggested by the local authorities.

RAILWAY SEASON TICKET DEPOSITS.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state under what authority the railway companies of the United Kingdom are enabled to enforce a deposit upon season ticket holders varying in amount and only returnable at the expiration of the period contracted for; and whether there are any regulations defining the amounts so charged.

MR. RITCHIE: The issue of the season tickets at reduced rates is a purely voluntary proceeding on the part of railway companies, and the terms upon which they are issued are therefore a matter of arrangement between them and their customers.

CATTLE WEIGHING ACT, 1891—OFFICIAL MARKET RETURNS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromartie): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he has yet been able to arrange for the official returns of prices received under The Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1891, to be published weekly instead of quarterly.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The suggestion of the hon. Member will be kept in view, but for the reasons already explained I fear that its adoption would not be feasible under existing conditions.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE—REGULATIONS.

*SIR HARRY BULLARD (Norwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the orders will prevent the movement of sheep out of scheduled district in the county of folk will be withdrawn in time to prevent any interference with the holding of important market known as Tom Fair.

The following questions also appeared on the paper on the same subject:—

SIR SAMUEL HOARE (Norwich): I ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether any further cases of foot and mouth disease have been reported from Norfolk; and, if not, whether the remaining restrictions on the movement of stock in and out of the scheduled district might now be safely withdrawn.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, will he explain why a part of the county of Suffolk, within a distance of six miles in a direct line from the scene of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, has been entirely freed from restrictions, whereas a part of the county of Norfolk, at a distance of nineteen miles from the scene of any outbreak, is still under restrictions; and, if so, whether he can remove all restrictions from the county of Norfolk, except in the actually infected area.

*MR. LONG: In reply to my hon. friends the Members for Norwich, and to the question on the same subject which stands in the name of the hon. Member for South Norfolk, I would say that no further outbreak of foot and mouth disease has been reported since the 20th February, and there is now every reason to believe that the efforts made to stamp out and to prevent the spread of disease have proved successful. In these circumstances I propose to withdraw the general restrictions on movement still remaining in force as from Monday next, an arrangement which will of course enable the market to which my hon. friend refers to be held under the usual conditions.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN SOUTH AMERICA.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that foot and mouth disease is prevalent in certain districts of South America; and, if so, what precautions

adopted to prevent the introduc- the disease into this country.

LONG: I have seen the state- n the public press on this subject, l investigation and inquiry is being especting them. In the meantime precautions are being taken at the animals wharves, with a view to se any danger of the introduction ase.

MMODATION FOR CRIMINAL LUNATICS.

WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary ate for the Home Department r he is aware that the Commis- in Lunacy, in their Report for tate that the sending of criminal s to county or borough asylums, they of necessity mix on equal with the ordinary patients, is felt hardship on the latter, while it ntroduces an element of danger, tainly of discipline, in the asylum; ill he consider the expediency of ng for the practice to be discon-

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR IOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. : RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): refer the hon. Member to an which I gave on the 4th of August the hon. Member for East al.* A new wing is now about to ed to Broadmoor, but I wish to that in no case will it be possible irely relieve county and borough s from their statutory obligation ive criminal lunatics.

RY ACT, 1895—PARTICULARS SECTION.

CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester- Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the ry of State for the Home Depart- hether he can state the intention section 1 of Clause 27 of the es and Workshops Bill, which gives to modify the Particulars Section Act of 1895 in its application to factories.

M. WHITE RIDLEY: It has been hat in the hosiery trade it is in e impossible to observe literally the ments of the Particulars Section, and if the clause in the Factory Bill becomes law what is intended is to allow all the particulars necessary for computing wages to be exhibited by placard in each room instead of being given to the individual workmen. This arrangement has been suggested by Mr. Birtwistle, the Examiner of Particulars, and is recommended by the union representing the workmen.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Is it intended to alter the law in the cotton and woollen industries generally, or only in respect of special branches, such as hosiery, &c.?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: It is intended to use the power asked for only in particular branches, for which a case is shown.

DANGEROUS OILS—LAMP FATALITIES IN LONDON.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Public Control Committee of the London County Council have stated in their report that the decrease of fatal lamp accidents in London from thirty-four in 1898 to twenty-three in 1899 may probably be traced to the increased quantity of high-flash Russian oil now being imported into London and to the decreased use of low-flash American oils; and whether he will bring in a Bill to raise the flash point in accordance with the public opinion thus indicated.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: The report referred to has been brought to my notice, but its contents hardly appear to afford sufficient data to warrant the conclusion suggested in the question. As to legislation, I must repeat that I can give no undertaking.

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS—VOTE OFFICE.

MR. HARWOOD: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if anything can be done to prevent the frequent incursions of chimney smoke into the Vote Office, which has to be so much frequented by Members.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I admit the force of this complaint, and am considering what steps can best be taken to provide a remedy.

The Parliamentary Debates [Fourth Vol. lxxv., p. 1474.

POST OFFICE—SUNDAY DUTIES.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the recent order implies that it is the intention to remove senior officers from Sunday duty, and cause their places to be filled by junior officers, many of whom are recent entrants to the service; and whether he is aware that many of the senior officers have been on this duty for about twenty years, and in many cases declined promotion to higher appointments with a view to an enhanced pension, and as the enforcement of the order will have the direct effect of nullifying the pension claims of these officers in respect of their long service on this Sunday duty, will he withdraw it.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston): It is not intended to deprive the senior officers of Sunday duty; but several of them have been in the habit of taking duty every Sunday; and the Postmaster General felt unable to sanction the continuance of a practice injurious alike to the service and to the men. It had become necessary for other reasons to summon some of the junior officers for Sunday duty, and their duties will be so regulated that they will not be required to attend more often than on one Sunday in every five or six. When a sufficient force of these officers has been trained no officer will be allowed to attend oftener than every alternate Sunday. Twelve seniors out of a total of one hundred and fifteen men have declined to be tried on higher duties, with a view to possible promotion, but in only two cases out of the twelve has the loss of Sunday extra duty been the reason assigned for declining the offer. The Postmaster General cannot, of course, recognise any right on the part of any officer in the service to Sunday, or any other kind of extra duty.

POST OFFICE—RE-ENLISTED SOLDIERS AND THEIR SITUATIONS.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what will be the position of old soldiers, now employed by the Post Office, in the event of their accepting the invitation to re-enlist for one year; will they be entitled to receive half their postal pay while with the colours; and will their posts be k open for them with a view to their re to civil employment.

MR. HANBURY: Old soldiers in employment of the Post Office wil granted permission to join the Res battalions if they wish to do so, and t places will be kept open for them. families of married men will receive a ration allowance, and in the case of t in Government employment half pay be given under the same conditions a the families of Reservists recalled to Colours.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK TELEGRAPHIC WITHDRAWAL

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the S tary to the Treasury, as representin Postmaster General, if he will sta number of withdrawals by telegraph the Post Office Savings Bank for th ending 31st December, 1899, an average cost to the depositor of eac withdrawal; and will he also stat number of telegraph notices of withd for payment on the following day the average cost to the depositor o such telegraphic notice.

MR. HANBURY: The numb withdrawals by telegraph from th Office Savings Bank during the ended 31st December, 1899, was 16 and the average cost to the depos each such withdrawal was 1s. 3d. The number of telegraph n of withdrawal for payment on the f ing day was 11,405; and the av cost to the depositor of each such graph notice was about 9d.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS GISTERING AND ADDING MACH

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (C bury): I beg to ask the Secretary Treasury, as representing the Postm General, whether his attention ha called by his officials to the fac a registering and adding ma thoroughly reliable and complete self, is now in use in the principal ba houses in London and other Eur capitals; whether he is aware tha proprietors of this invention offe reasonable guarantee that the ma will do the work of the Postal Sa Bank so rapidly and well that 100 p using these machines will perform

ties of 300 persons now employed; ether, without discharging any person w employed in the Savings Bank, he ill, if the facts be as stated, not employ e additional persons arranged for in this ar's Estimates in the Savings Bank; ether he is aware that, though several these registering machines are on trial the Money Order Office, opposition is fered to their general use by a high ficial in the Savings Bank; whether he ill examine for himself the machine and nsult the leading bankers as to their oing the work effectively as asserted; d whether he will accept evidence and xamine witnesses on the question of the achines being specially adapted for avings Bank work.

MR. HANBURY: The use of these achines affects not only the Post Office ut other Departments, such as the Inland evenue and the Customs. I am afraid hat public Departments do not always vail themselves of modern improvements s early as private firms; and I will make nquiry as to how far the machines are eally calculated to save labour and xpense in particular Departments, and ow far they are proving useful in the ase of private firms doing similar work. As regards the Savings Bank, I am nformed that the machines have been ried there, and that they have been ound to be of little or no advantage in hat particular Department, as so small a ortion of its work consists in merely dding up columns of figures. Six were ome months ago purchased by the Post Office for use in the accountants' offices in Edinburgh and Dublin and at the money rder office in London, and further trials re about to be made at the larger provincial post offices. The results so far have een very satisfactory.

POST OFFICE—STAMP CONTRACTS—MESSRS. DE LA RUE AND CO.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to sk the Secretary to the Treasury, as epresenting the Postmaster General, hether any fresh contract has been made r renewed with Messrs. De la Rue and o. for the supply of stamps, inks, or ostcards; if so, for what period; and hen the present contracts with Messrs. e la Rue and Co. will terminate.

MR. HANBURY: A fresh contract as been made with Messrs. De La Rue for the supply of stamps and postcards, and runs for ten years. The contract which would have run up to end of 1901 was cancelled, and a very large reduction on the cost of that contract was effected, to commence from 1st October, 1899. We were also able, under the new contract, to supply a larger commercial postcard. The present contract for ink has been in existence since 1882, and is terminable at any time on giving twelve months' notice. The latter contract is one made by the Post Office, and not as the rest of the contract by the Inland Revenue. I may state that I think the hon. Member for Canterbury has done a great public service in calling attention to the contracts for inks.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS—COLONIAL REPORTS.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (Londonderry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will take means to supplement the Reports on University Education in foreign countries by obtaining reports from Canada, Australia, and other British colonies as to the provision made for university education of Roman Catholics.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the reports have been obtained and are in the hands of the printers.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state whether it is intended to take the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill before Easter, and if so, when.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to take this Bill before we separate for the Easter holidays.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to put it down as the first Order of the day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I daresay I shall be able to do that.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS AREAS—MINOR LIGHTS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet arrived at any decision in regard to the points where minor lights

are to be fixed in the Congested Districts area.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The difficulty with the Congested Districts Board has not been as regards the site of future lighthouses, but to decide how they are to be maintained after being erected, a matter about which no conclusion has yet been arrived at.

EDINBURGH REVENUE BUILDINGS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that, although £3,500 was voted for the year 1898-9 for alterations and additions to the Revenue Buildings, Edinburgh, only £1,836 4s. 2d. was expended during the year, the slow progress being attributed partly to difficulties with the foundations, partly to inclement weather, and partly to an insufficient supply of stone from the quarries; and will he state if stone of the kind required was unobtainable at other quarries; was the contractor under penalties for non-fulfilment of contract to time; and, if so, will he say whether penalties have been enforced, and whether the contract price has been or will be exceeded.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The quarry specified in the contract for the new Inland Revenue building at Edinburgh ceased working shortly after the building was begun, and permission was given to the contractor to use stone from another quarry. The required supply could not, however, be punctually obtained owing to the great demands for the stone at the time. No equally suitable stone could have been obtained from any other quarry. The contractor was under penalties for non-completion by a specified time, and the question of enforcing these is under consideration. The contract has not been, and will not be, exceeded.

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) ACT, 1899—RULES.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the formalities required in connection with rules to be prescribed under The Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1899, have yet been completed; and whether the statute has come into operation in Scotland.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: T reply to both paragraphs of the h Member's question is in the affirmativ.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: Ha the rules in fact been laid? They ha not appeared among the papers.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I they have been laid in the short sess in the autumn, which did not permit their being on the table the full fo days.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS IN IRE LAND—CORDITE CONTRACTS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I b to ask the First Lord of the Treas whether his statement that one-third the total supply of cordite for the Ar is purchased in Ireland is based u official figures; whether he is aware t the proprietors of the cordite factory Arklow, in Ireland, are discharging th Irish workpeople at present for want orders, although a large quantity cordite is now required for the Na and will he arrange for more orders be given to cordite factories in Ireland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The statem about the supply of cordite purcha from the trades is, I believe, accurate. am not aware that the factory at Arkl is discharging workpeople, but a consid able order for cordite will shortly issued.

IRISH RAILWAYS—SUNDAY TRA ON THE DUBLIN, WICKLOW, A WEXFORD RAILWAY.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE (Kerry, W I beg to ask the Secretary to Treasury, as representing the P master General, if the Post Office agree to a re-arrangement of the Sun trains on the Dublin, Wicklow, and W ford Railway, so as to enable travel from Wexford on Sundays to re London on Monday mornings, instead their being obliged, as they are under existing arrangements, to leave Wexf on Saturday afternoon to be in Lon on Monday morning.

MR. HANBURY: The only Sun train from Wexford to Dublin which under the control of the Postma General is the night mail train leav Wexford at 8.15 p.m., and the railv company are therefore at liberty to m

that alterations they may deem desirable in the hours of any other train. No facilities beyond those afforded by the night mail train are required on this line for the mail service on Sundays.

IRISH PUBLIC RECORDS—REPORTS OF THE DEPUTY KEEPER.

SIR T. G. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will have the Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland, which are out of print, reprinted, as is done in the case of the Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in England; if he will cause the publication of the Calendar to the Fiants for Ireland to be continued where it was left off in 1886, and carried on until completed; and if he can state how far the publication of the MSS. (English, Foreign, and Irish) of the Irish Franciscans in Dublin has proceeded, and when they will be published.

MR. HANBURY: The hon. Member is mistaken in thinking that Reports of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in England have been reprinted. I am informed that it is not desirable to continue the Calendar to the Fiants for Ireland. The period covered by the Calendar was selected because the Patent Rolls belonging to it were very defective; but it was always intended to stop the work when it had been carried to the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, as after that date the Patent Rolls are complete and include practically everything in the Fiants. Calendars of the Patent Rolls of the reign of James I., the early years of Charles I. and part of Charles II. have already been published. The Report of the Inspector of the Historical Manuscripts Commission on the MSS. of the Irish Franciscans in Dublin is almost complete, and will probably be presented to Parliament before the end of the present session.

SHANNON AND LIMERICK CANAL TOLLS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to resolutions of public Boards in Ireland protesting against the high tolls charged by the Board of Works on the traffic carrried over the Shannon and Limerick Canal; and whether this canal is now vested in the Board of Works, and if that public Department, in accordance with resolutions of county councils and other bodies, will be induced to grant substantial reductions on their present toll levies.

MR. HANBURY: My attention has been called to a resolution passed by a conference at which representatives of the North Tipperary County Council attended. The navigation and canal are vested in the Board of Works. The present tolls are not higher than those which existed previously to 1894, and which in that year came under the notice of a Joint Committee on the Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 10) (Lagan, etc., Canals) Order Confirmation Act, 1894. Not only did the Act authorise tolls equivalent to the then existing tolls, but it left a margin within which they might, with the consent of the Treasury, be increased. The tolls on the navigation and canal are apparently not above, but rather below, corresponding charges on other canals in Ireland. I may state that the tolls are quite insufficient to maintain the navigation and the sluices, and to meet the other charges in connection with the Shannon. They are supplemented by receipts from rents and some small sundries; and even with these aids the account of the navigation is generally overdrawn.

HOUSE TO HOUSE LETTER DELIVERY IN IRELAND.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he would state what progress has been made, as promised by a late Budget, for the free and house to house delivery of letters by the post office in the rural districts in Ireland.

MR. HANBURY: Down to the end of last month, about 23,000,000 letters a year had been included in the free delivery in Ireland which would not formerly have obtained this advantage. The work has been found to be much greater than was anticipated, and there are still a certain number of letters for which a delivery has to be provided. The remaining extensions are being proceeded with as rapidly as possible.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): When will the arrangement be completed?

MR. HANBURY: In the course of the present year.

SUNDAY POSTAL DELIVERIES IN BELFAST.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, with reference to the Belfast Post Office, whether he is aware that there is a town delivery of letters and papers every Christmas Day, and that no such delivery is made on Sundays; how many officials are engaged in sorting and looking after letters every Sunday in this post office; how many persons have private boxes therein from which letters are given to their messengers who call for same; and whether he will consider the desirability of extending to the city of Belfast at least one Sunday delivery of letters, as in other towns in Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Has there been any general expression of opinion in Belfast in favour of the Sunday opening of the post office, or is it desired only by the publicans?

MR. HANBURY: There is no delivery of letters by postmen at Belfast on Sunday, but letters are delivered to callers at the post office from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. One delivery is made by postmen on Christmas Day, in accordance with the usual rule at all towns, whether having a Sunday delivery or not. The number of officers engaged in dealing with letters at the Belfast Post Office on Sunday is thirty-four. The number of persons having private boxes and calling regularly for their letters on that day is ten. As regards the question of affording a Sunday house to house delivery at Belfast, it is the general practice to consider the question of altering existing Sunday arrangements at provincial towns or cities only upon application being made to that effect by the local authority, and that has not been made in this case.

DUBLIN GAS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the published report of Professor E. Reynolds, of Trinity College, Dublin, warning the public of his discovery that the Dublin Gas Company, without notice to the citizens or the corporation, had turned 17 per cent. of carbon monoxide into their mains; did the Board of Trade receive any notice of this intermixture of water gas with coal gas in Dublin; is he aware that water gas is the most deadly gaseous poi known, is absolutely fatal to animal l and that its use as an illuminant has b made illegal in many American Sta is he aware that leakages from the Dul mains are constant, and that since t introduction of water gas the death r amongst the population has risen so e mously that the Lord Lieutenant ha pointed a Commission to investigate cause; has he any information to s whether the poison from water ga cumulative in the human system, whether any remedy known to sc exists for even cases of partial poison and will the Government take any to protect the public from the admi of this product with ordinary coal ga

MR. RITCHIE: I have not seen published Report to which the hon learned Member refers, but I under that Professor Reynolds, in a lectu Trinity College, recently made observations as to the increased propo of carbonic oxide in the gas suppli Dublin, due to the admixtur carburetted water gas with coal gas. Board of Trade received no notice o intention of the gas company to mak alterations in the nature of the ga are the company required to give notice, but they have now informe Board that the plans of the nec works were submitted to the corpo and their purpose explained. I ar aware that the use of water gas ha made illegal in any American Stat from the Report issued last year Home Office Departmental Comm which inquired into the question o supply of water gas it appears that United States carburetted water very largely used, and formed in 1896 seventy per cent. of the total gas s The hon. and learned Member will perusal of the Report, obtain information with reference to this esting subject, which it is impossil summarise in an answer to his que The Local Government Board for I inform me that they are not whether the high death rate is i degree attributable to the alleged le of gas. The Commission appoint the Lord Lieutenant has directe inquiries into the general causes c death rate, and pending the Repo the Commission that Board can e no definite opinion on the point.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Would there be any difficulty in granting to Irish Members such a Committee as was granted to the London Members with regard to the [illegible] in London?

MR. RITCHIE: If the hon. and learned Gentleman will call at the Board of Trade we shall be glad to put before him all the information we possess.

KERRY COUNTY SURVEYOR'S SALARY.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what grounds the Local Government Board have ordered the Kerry County Council to increase the County Surveyor's salary from £600 per annum to £850.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): By the terms of Section 115, Sub-Section 18, of the Local Government Act, the Local Government Board are required to determine the increase of remuneration of officers transferred from the grand jury to the county council in proportion to the increase of their duties, and notwithstanding the admittedly large increase of duties devolving upon the county surveyor the county council declined to allow him any increase of salary. Having carefully considered the character and extent of the increased duties of this officer, the Board fixed his salary at £830 a year, not £850, as stated in the question.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the duties have not been diminished by his duties in connection with the Urban Council having ceased under the Local Government Act?

DR. TANNER (Cork County, Mid.): Has the increase of salary been made with the authority of the Duke of Connaught, who happens to be a friend of the gentleman affected?

[No answer was given.]

BALLYMAHON UNION AND TEACHERS' FEES.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what portion of result fees to teachers the guardians of the Ballymahon Union will have to contribute in case the union remains contributory under the Permissive Act of 1875; and will he explain why, seeing that before the Local Government Act came into force the guardians were recouped two-thirds of the amount contributed, the Local Government Board recently issued a circular to the guardians informing them that no recoupment will be made in future.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The amount of the assessment on the Ballymahon Union for the year ending the 31st instant is £326, being one-third of the full amount of estimated results fees less amount of the surplus of previous assessments. The Local Government Board have not issued a circular informing the guardians that no recoupment will be made in future. The circular in question merely called the guardians' attention to the provisions of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act, 1899, with respect to the portion of the grant under the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, hitherto paid by the Commissioners of National Education to contributory unions, and which is no longer payable in the same manner.

LAND SUB-COMMISSION—MALLOW CASES.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can state what time has elapsed since the Land Sub-Commission sat in Mallow; and whether, in view of the large number of fair rent applications sent in from the surrounding districts, the Land Commission will arrange for sitting in Mallow at an early day.

MR. ATKINSON: A Sub-Commission last sat in Mallow in July, 1899. The Land Commissioners will arrange for another sitting in that town at as early a date as possible.

LAND PURCHASE—CREAGH ESTATE, Co. CORK.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the tenants of the Creagh

Estate (County Cork) have applied to the Court of Chancery with a view to purchase their holdings; and whether the Court has been willing, since 1896 or 1897, to sell the estate: and, if so, what is the reason for the delay in the proceedings.

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member having been good enough to supply me privately with particulars respecting the estate referred to in the question, I have made further inquiries into the matter, and am informed that no petition for the sale of these lands has ever been presented to the Land Judge's Court. So far as I can ascertain, no order for sale has been made by any Court, and certainly none has been made by the Land Judge affecting the particular lands in question.

DUBLIN CASTLE ARCHIVES—LIMERICK CORPORATION.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will cause inquiries to be made in the Archive Office of Dublin Castle, or other public record departments, to ascertain if any charters or other original documents referring to the Corporation of Limerick can be discovered, with a view to their restoration to local representative trustees.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Inquiries have been made, but no trace of the documents referred to can be found either in the Record Tower at the Castle, or in the Public Record Office of Ireland.

LAND COURT AT KANTURK AND MACROOM.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he can say what was the last date upon which the Assistant Land Commissioners sat in Kanturk, County Cork; is he aware that upon that occasion not more than half of the cases listed were disposed of; and, in view of this fact and of the number of additional applications to fix a fair rent, whether the Land Commission will arrange for an early sitting in Kanturk.

DR. TANNER: I beg at the same time to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland what was the latest date upon which the Assistant Land Commissioners sat in Macroom, County Cork; wh[illegible] all the cases listed for hearing we[illegible] posed of; and, if not, how many re[illegible] unheard; how many additional a[illegible] tions to fix a fair rent have been [illegible] in the Macroom and Millstreet distr[illegible] and when the Land Commission will [illegible] their next sitting for the distric[illegible] question.

MR. ATKINSON: This questio[illegible] the hon. Member for North Cork [illegible] appeared on the Paper for the first t[illegible] this morning, and, as I have not [illegible] received from the Land Commissio[illegible] report upon it, I will ask the hon. M[illegible] ber to repeat it on Monday. The s[illegible] remark applies to the question stan[illegible] in the name of the hon. Member for N[illegible] Cork.

DUBLIN DISTURBANCES—PROSECUTION OF TRINITY COLLEGE STUDENTS.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that recently a number of Trinity College students were before the police courts in Dublin for assaulting the police and other offences and that Mr. Tobias, who usually prosecutes for the police, stated that he had only received word of the cases since he came into court; and whether he can state who was responsible for not instructing Mr. Tobias in time, or if Mr. Tobias got his full fee in these cases.

MR. ATKINSON: The students referred to were brought to the police court within an hour after their arrest. The police instruct Mr. Tobias, and he received the only notice which, under the circumstances, was practicable. He is paid by salary, and not by fees.

COUNTY COUNCIL RATES — DEDUCTION FOR RENTS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether tenants of houses in towns in Ireland under £4 valuation are entitled to deduct from their rents the amount of the rates collected by county councils: whether he is aware that landlords are refusing to allow this to be done; and will he insert a clause in the coming Local Government Act Amendment Bill to definitely settle the question.

MR. ATKINSON: It is impossible to answer this question in its present

ral form; the County Council collect ral rates. The hon. Member will find he 54th Section of the Local Govern- t Act full directions as to when, and what amounts, deductions are to be le. I am not aware that landlords are sing to allow proper deductions to be le, but if they are the tenant has a l remedy. The matter is clearly lt with by the 54th Section of the and no further legislation is neces- on the subject.

IRISH CENSUS—DEAF MUTES.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG: I beg to Mr. Attorney General for Ireland ether he will insert a clause in the h Census Bill providing that the ne, age, and postal address of every f mute be given to enable those erested in their education to discover ir location.

MR. ATKINSON: The information on se points is furnished in the Returns ady made, confidentially, to the Regis- r General, and the numbers are pub- ed in the census tables; but I cannot sent to introduce into the Bill a clause ich would, in many instances, adver- the domestic afflictions of the families which these unhappy persons belong.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Attorney General for Ireland whether progress has been made in the framing the promised Local Government Act endment Bill, and what date he pro- es for its introduction.

MR. ATKINSON: The Bill mentioned eady. I cannot assign a specific date its introduction, but I hope it will be roduced at an early date.

ND VALUATION—ANNALY ESTATE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Mr. orney General for Ireland whether he ware that six tenants who made appli- ions to purchase their holdings on the naly (Rathcline) Estate were induced the receiver to sign agreements to e their fair rents fixed by the land ers; and why it is that their holdings e neither been visited nor their rents ixed, and will he cause inquiry to be le as to the cause of the delay.

MR. ATKINSON: This question would appear to be a repetition of one put by the same hon. Member and answered before. However, I have called for a further Report in reference to it, and as I have not yet received this Report, I must ask him to repeat it on Monday.

ENNIS UNION—DRUG ANALYSIS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why the Irish Local Government Board have not provided for the proper conveyance of drugs from the various dispensaries of the Ennis Union when brought periodically to the clerk of the union for transmission for analysis.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The provision of proper conveyance of samples of drugs from the dispensaries to the clerk of the union for the purposes of analysis is a matter entirely for the consideration of the guardians themselves.

PROCLAIMED MEETING AT CLONFREE.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the conduct of District Inspector M'Ghee in dispersing a public meeting by force at Clonfree, North Roscommon, on Sunday, 11th March; and whether this action was taken under the direction of the Irish Government; and, if so, for what reason were the people of this district of North Roscommon deprived of the right of free speech and public meeting.

MR. ATKINSON: A meeting under the auspices of the United Irish League was proposed to be held at Clonfree on the date mentioned in the question, but a sworn information having been made by the District Inspector of Constabulary to the effect that he had reasonable grounds for believing, and did believe, that the meeting would lead to intimidation and would be calculated to prevent persons from doing what they had a legal right to do, namely, to take grazing land, directions were given by the Government that the meeting should not be permitted. A number of persons, estimated at 300, endeavoured to hold a meeting, but they were dispersed by the police without,

however, having to have recourse to actual force.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Was any notice of the prohibition of this meeting given to the people of the district and, if so, how much?

MR. ATKINSON: I do not think any printed notice was issued; but verbal notice was certainly given. As I have said, no actual force had to be used.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: In such cases as this, where it is intended to prohibit a meeting, would it not conduce to the peace to issue notices?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What object is gained by thus stifling public opinion in Ireland?

[No answer was given.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the public attention drawn by recent events to the subject of Imperial Telegraphic Communication, he will place the Vote for Imperial subsidies to cable companies first on an early Friday afternoon.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg at the same time to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can arrange for taking the Vote for telegraph subsidies on some early Friday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If I find there is a general desire to discuss this Vote I will endeavour to put it down at a convenient time. But we have not moved the Speaker out of the Chair on Civil Service Supply, and it is clearly premature to fix any particular day for discussion.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Factories and Workshops Bill is likely to be taken before Easter.

MR. DESMONDE: What business for next week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received representations from quarters of the House that the Factories and Workshops Bill should not be taken before Easter. In these circumstances I do not propose to take the Bill before Easter. Monday will be occupied by the Committee on the Finance Bill. I do not know how long that stage will last, but if it is not concluded on Monday it will be taken on Tuesday. I cannot reasonably doubt that Monday and Tuesday will be sufficient to see the Bill through. On Thursday I shall propose to take, after the Local Water Bills are disposed of, the Municipal Trading Committee, which I think ought to be appointed without undue delay. The delay which has already occurred has caused considerable inconvenience in many quarters. The next measure will be the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill, which my hon. friend very nearly got through last night, and there ought to be no difficulty in taking the Second Reading on Thursday. The other Bills will be small and not of a controversial character.

MR. STEADMAN: When will the Housing of the Working Classes Bill be taken? Can two or three days notice be given?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will endeavour to give what notice I can—two days notice, at all events. I hope to be able to take the Bill before Easter, but I cannot give any promise.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Dublin Corporation Bill and Clontarf Urban District Council Bill,—That they concur with the Commons in their Resolution, "That it is expedient that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons."

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law with respect to persons carrying on business as Money lenders." [Money-lending Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Urban District Council of Otley to construct additional waterworks and for other purposes." [Otley Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to divide the separate undertaking authorised by The Donegal Railway Act, 1

›parate undertakings; to extend for the purchase of lands and ı of works by that Act autho- provide for the granting of re- favour of the railway from › Ballyshannon; to release the ›uncil of the County of Donegal r liability under the West ›ight Railway Order; and for ›oses." [Donegal Railway Bill

›o, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to an Inebriates Acts Board for y Palatine of Lancaster; and purposes." [Lancashire Ine- ts Board Bill [Lords.]

›RBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL ›ATER BILL [LORDS].

›AL RAILWAY BILL [LORDS].

›HIRE INEBRIATES ACTS ›OARD BILL [LORDS].

e first time; and referred to the of Petitions for Private Bills.

YARMOUTH PORT AND HAVEN BILL.

d, with Amendments; Report ı the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILLS.

AND WORKSHOP ACT (1878) ›MENDMENT (No. 2).

›mend the Factory and Work- 1878, by reducing the period of nt on Saturday, ordered to be n by Mr. Harwood and Mr.

AND WORKSHOP ACT (1878) ENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

›end the Factory and Workshop by reducing the period of em- on Saturday," presented and rst time; to be read a second ı Wednesday, 11th April, and to . [Bill 140.]

LTURAL HOLDINGS (No. 2).

›mend and consolidate the law › Agricultural Holdings in Eng- ›red to be brought in by Mr. Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Luttrell, ›obert Price.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend and consolidate the law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England," presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 141.]

SUPPLY.

[Committee.]

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (IRELAND).

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I rise for the purpose of moving the resolution which stands in my name, and to again draw the attention of the House to the grievances under which the Catholics of Ireland suffer in the matter of higher education. This subject is by no means a new one to the House, and although it has been frequently debated, I tell hon. Members that the Irish representatives will continue to present their case for redress so long as the British Parliament turns a deaf ear to their claims for justice. From 1854 up to the present time, the discussions on this subject may almost be said to have been perennial, but it is a matter of regret that, while apparently some advance has been made in converting British statesmen, no appreciable advance has been made in the direction of legislation. In 1897 the Leader of the House showed a sympathetic and kindly interest in the question, for which I for one am deeply grateful, and declared that, though not a Home Ruler, he was anxious on this matter to put all sectarian prejudices aside, and that an attempt should be made to meet the wishes of Ireland in this respect. Hopes were naturally raised that this question was nearing a settlement, but although the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was delivered in 1897, practically nothing has been done. The question has made no further progress. I admit that this university question in Ireland is hedged round with many difficulties, but I regret that the right hon. Gentleman—and in saying this I have not the slightest inten-

tion of wounding his susceptibilities—has not had the courage to depart from the missionary field and to make an attempt in the legislative arena. It is perfectly well known to Irish Catholics that this question is dangerous to the right hon. Gentleman, because he yields too much to the bigoted feelings of a section of the people in the north of Ireland. I am aware he has difficult cards to play; but seeing he admits that we have an unanswerable case, surely no excuse for delay in legislating upon it should be based on the bigotry and intolerance of a small section of the people. I do not wish to say anything to inflame or incite a feeling of bitterness in this debate; such a course would only retard the cause we wish to advance. I only ask the right hon. Gentleman to bear in mind that we have waited long and patiently, and that having exhausted every form of argument, it is not to be wondered at if there is shown some disposition to depart from the paths of mild persuasion. The Catholics of Ireland form the great majority of the people of that country, and they are demanding not predominance but equality. We are not asking that exceptional treatment shall be meted out to us; if we were we could understand the opposition made to our claims, but surely it is no answer to our demand for a Catholic university to say that we have offered to us the open door of Trinity College, Dublin, free access to the Queen's Colleges, or a share of the advantages of the Royal Universities. I say that the strongest point in our case is that it is a demand simply for equality. We have no desire to interfere with the traditions of Trinity College or its endowments, or to take it away from the social and political class who have hitherto enjoyed, and will continue to enjoy, all its privileges and all its endowments. I have here a most interesting extract from a work which is being circulated just at the present moment, pointing out the tremendous advantages of this institution to the class in whose hands it is. I think the Protestants of Ireland have no grievance, or should have no legitimate grievance, against Catholics who seek equality of university education. The writer says—

"A very superficial glance at history is enough to show that the educational system of Trinity College is an unbroken record of antagonism to Irish sentiment as [illegible] religion and national traditions. [illegible] possible for the Catholic community [illegible] nise it as an adequate source of higher [illegible] tion, for it is still as distinctly opp[illegible] Catholic faith and practice as it was [illegible] the abolition of tests. We know [illegible] it has been said that the door stands [illegible] Catholics to enter freely, but nothing has [illegible] changed in Trinity College during the [illegible] half century, except the opening of a [illegible] which was before more consistently [illegible] We wish to see the higher education [illegible] classes in Ireland promoted as best [illegible] those concerned, whether they be Cat[illegible] Episcopalian, or Presbyterian. [illegible] College suffices not, and that is all we [illegible] say, but a few details as to the revenue [illegible] other advantages possessed by the [illegible] may be noted. The library contains [illegible] of 252,000 volumes. The botanic garden [illegible] museum, the engineering, medical, and [illegible] schools are all splendidly equipped and [illegible] dowed. The revenue up to a few years [illegible] was nearly £80,000 a year, though in [illegible] years, owing to the shrinkage in the [illegible] of its rent roll, it must have sunk to less [illegible] half that sum. The number of stu[illegible] receiving higher education in this colle[illegible] 1899 was 1,047, or considerably less than [illegible] the number who entered for the [illegible] University examinations in 1898. But [illegible] students of Trinity amply suffice to fill [illegible] halls of one college, and the Episcop[illegible] Protestants are satisfied with it."

The passage I have quoted will be fo[illegible] in a book published by Dr. Salmon, [illegible] of the leading professors of Tri[illegible] College, Dublin. That is a statemen[illegible] may say, on behalf of Trinity College, [illegible] it is made from a source which cannot [illegible] described as partial. It is a statem[illegible] which indicates in few words the tremendous and powerful advantages which th[illegible] Protestants of Ireland have enjoyed, an[illegible] will, as I said before, continue to enjoy i[illegible] the future in the matter of universi[illegible] and higher education. But what is th[illegible] picture on the other side? I notice th[illegible] we have had some cheers of the statemen[illegible] that Trinity College is open to Roma[illegible] Catholics. I notice that it will probabl[illegible] be made one of the stock arguments [illegible] reply to us in this debate. It is tr[illegible] that Trinity College is open, and h[illegible] been open for a very long time, to su[illegible] Catholics as those who, evading, I m[illegible] take the liberty of saying, their religio[illegible] responsibilities, wish to enjoy the adv[illegible] tages of the higher education in th[illegible] college. It is no answer to us to s[illegible] that such distinguished and able Cathol[illegible] as the present Lord Chief Baron, L[illegible] Morris, and other distinguished juri[illegible] and public men in Ireland, have tak[illegible] advantage of Trinity College. It is

Mr. J. P. Farrell.

o us to say that they have come, of the bishops of our church cathed through the college so far religious belief is concerned. o answer to us as regards those roughout the length and breadth land who, having somewhat feelings from the religious stand- ll not disobey the standing and wn objections of the pastors of urch, and avail themselves of the ties of that college. We have in this controversy on the ques- the establishment of a Roman University most valuable assist- l I gladly and freely acknowledge tance which has brought him into siderable difficulties in his own ency—from the hon. Member for Tyrone. What does the hon. an the Member for South Tyrone t Trinity College? He has had in his views on the subject of y education for Catholics at great Ireland since he made his public cement. He has written a of interesting and able letters, as made a number of speeches in of the position which I am glad he has taken up. He describes in those letters—a description am sure he will not depart from House—as a Protestant of the nts. Addressing a meeting of his ents on the 27th of October, 1897, ounty of Tyrone, the hon. Gentle- scribed Trinity College in this

in University was founded by Queen ; much of its revenues were derived confiscated lands of Catholics; its nd examining professorial staffs were xclusively Protestant, and the over- mass of its students were of the gion."

n. gentleman went on to put of our opponents in Tyrone est possible manner, and a manner, in which it should most fairly t reasonably strike those gentle- He said—

ose the conditions were reversed—if osphere were as distinctly Catholic as now Protestant—if Jesuits and ere its professors—if mass was sung s walls every day—would they send s to it as freely as they did now that distinctively Protestant University?"

; we could say could, I think, early put the case made against our arguments than that short extract from the speech of the hon. Member. But it may be said that the hon. Gentleman in speaking thus did not represent any person but himself. I could occupy a considerable portion of the time of this House in quoting from other speeches by eminent and distinguished Protestants who hold exactly the same view. We know, for instance, that there are a considerable number of distinguished gentlemen throughout the length and breadth of England who are in sympathy with us on this question. I believe myself that those gentlemen, if they could infuse among what I might call the lower strata of Protestantism—I assure hon. Gentlemen that I do not use the expression in any sense as offensive, or say one word to offend any person's susceptibilities, I merely use it in the social sense—among the lower strata of Protestantism they would bring, I am sure, such a volume of opinion to bear as would considerably strengthen the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury in his desire to do justice to us in this matter. Then we are told that we have the Queen's University, and that we have the advantage of the Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Galway, and Cork, to which our young people can, without any strain on their religious feelings, go for the higher education. Objectionable as the Protestant atmosphere of Trinity College may be, in my opinion the godless atmosphere of the Queen's Colleges is far more objectionable. In Ireland we feel very deeply on the religious question. Religion, perhaps, in these more material days, has not such a hold upon the public mind as it had in times gone by. We have suffered much and long for our religion, and I venture to assure Her Majesty's Government that the Irish people of the class from whom it may be expected you would get the groundwork of your Catholic University will never surrender or endanger their religious belief for any such system of education as is represented by either Trinity College or the Queen's University. The gentleman who circulated the statement of which I read a portion in reference to Trinity College, says of the Queen's University—

"In like manner the Presbyterian students of Ulster are sufficiently numerous to justify the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in appropriating, as they had already

done, the Queen's College, Belfast. This college is quite capable of being in Belfast all that Trinity is in Dublin. Belfast is a rapidly increasing centre. It is sufficiently important to become a university town. Sincerely desirous that all our fellow-countrymen should share in the necessary gifts which higher education can impart, we begrudge nothing that may be required to achieve this purpose, either from the public revenues or through Acts of Parliament. But we do justly claim that the Catholic population, the vast majority of the people in Ireland, should not be kept in a position inferior to the Episcopalian and Presbyterian minorities. A Government has the right to claim the loyalty of its subjects as the price of the performance of the correlative duty. The first principle of British Government is to give equal rights to all parts of the British Isles. England has so outgrown Ireland in wealth and population that the two nations cannot be compared. But Irish Catholics demand from the Government which claims their loyalty the right to be treated with at least comparative equality with other religious denominations in that country."

If we examine this university education question as it affects other portions of the United Kingdom, what do we find? Take Scotland, for instance. Scotland has four universities, which discharge a most important duty to that part of the kingdom, and which enable the poorest class to take advantage in the way I am glad to know they do of the higher education placed within their reach. Some of these foundations were originally Roman Catholic. It is interesting to note that the University of Edinburgh was founded in 1582 by James VI.; the University of St. Andrews was founded in 1411 by a Bull of Pope Benedict XIII.; the University of Glasgow was founded by a Bull of Pope Nicholas V.; and the University of Aberdeen was founded so far back as 1494, before the Reformation. I quite admit that the national religion of Scotland has changed, and I presume that with the change these universities can now be described as Presbyterian Universities. At all events, there are ample facilities given to people professing the national faith of Scotland to obtain, without any religious bar, that university education of which the Irish Catholics are so wholly deprived. Personally I feel very strongly on this question. You have in Ireland set up a denominational system of primary education. You have given our priests and bishops the right to safeguard the interests of the young children in that matter. You have also instituted a system of intermediate education to which no religious bar applies, and which is availed of very largely indeed by the Ka Catholic colleges to compete, as i do very successfully, with their Prote fellow-countrymen for prizes and hon Why do you stop short of unive education? Why do you, in point of quantity dealt with, strain at the and swallow the camel? There are intermediate students every year Ireland, fully 6,000 of whom come the Catholic schools and colleges. belong principally to what may be the middle classes; they belong tially to the class for which you hav vided such splendid university edu throughout the length and bread England and Scotland, without im upon those who take advantage obligations or interposing obstacles their religious feelings and sent cannot overcome. Why, in this should you treat Ireland differentl other parts of the United Kin Perhaps we are appealing in vai settlement of this question t Arguments, strong, cogent, and seemed to me, unanswerable, hav addressed to this House time afte but so little practical good has that one might almost despair of any change in the tone and tempe House in dealing with this questio just the same as with our financia sion. Yet we hope that things always be as they are at present House of Commons. We fe eventually, whether by the inter of Parliament or some other me justice of our case will bring this to such a stage that good to u come. Three-fourths of the pe Ireland are Roman Catholics. fourths of the taxation which you of Ireland is raised from the Catholics of the country. The class contribute to your taxatio poorest man standing at the street who, perhaps, could not tell y meaning of the word "universit contributing factor, in his own insignificant way, to the mainten this great Empire. When Ireland's sentatives in this House, feeling t educational interests of their peop been and are being neglected, com here and make an appeal for ju sincerely trust it will receive from Members opposite a sympatheti careful consideration. We may expecting a definite settlement to

we are throwing our bread upon the rs, in the hope that it may bring us thing back in the nature of the relief e grievance of which we complain. I that when the First Lord of the sury stands up he will be able to e such a pronouncement as will ince the Catholics of Ireland that there ncerity, determination, and courage is own part and on the part of those think with him in the matter of g justice to us on this subject. I beg ove the resolution which stands in name.

IR T. G. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): ave to thank my hon. friend for the pliment he has paid me in asking me follow him in support of this motion, I think I may very fairly contulate him on the admirable way in ich he has treated what is unquestionly a very difficult question. This tter may be regarded from many ints of view. There is one aspect of case which in recent years has y forcibly appealed to me, and it is, t in this matter of university educan we have not been very well treated the Conservative party in England. I ll not go back very many years, but it ll be in the recollection of most hon. embers that in 1887 the present Chanlor of the Exchequer told us that this estion was being taken into serious conleration. He actually informed us at the Government were prepared to al with the matter, and that they would bmit their proposals in the following year. year or two passed away and again we re told that the Conservative party re prepared to deal with the question. opes were inspired in Ireland by this omise, and the Irish people looked nfidently forward to an early settlent of the question. Nothing, however, s been heard of the matter since, unless except the public statements made by e First Lord of the Treasury and other member of the Government, ose speeches have been quoted, and ich express sympathetic views upon is question. In view of these circumances, the general impression created the treatment of this question by the overnment is that it is made to suit the nvenience of English political parties, d that they treat it from the point of ew of English political expediency inead of upon its merits as a case of justice to Ireland. The question has now, I think, reached a stage at which we may invite the House and the Government to consider this question upon its merits, not in the interests of any political party, but from the higher Imperial standpoint of the obligations of the Government of the Empire. As far as we are concerned the question seems to us to be far too large and too urgent to be left any longer in abeyance. Before I go any further, I would like to impress this point upon the House. There are hon. Members who sympathise with our views on this matter and are favourably inclined towards this question of a Catholic University for Ireland, but they do not take a very active interest in the question, because they believe we are not very anxious about it in Ireland. Many hon. Members think that we do not regard it as a pressing question of general or widespread importance. I should like, if possible, to disabuse the minds of hon. Members of this opinion, and I wish to assure them that Catholic Ireland is strongly and deeply in earnest in this matter, and we, as the representatives of the Catholics of Ireland, are only giving expression to the strong and universal feelings of our constituencies when we say that this is a matter in which the people of Ireland take the warmest and the keenest possible interest. I can assure the House that in regard to this question of a Catholic University education for our children, the present situation cannot be allowed indefinitely to continue, and if this House persists in refusing to provide that education the Catholics of Ireland unquestionably will have to take measures to secure that education elsewhere; and if it is not possible for higher education to be obtained for the Catholics in Ireland a very considerable section, at all events, will see to it that higher education is obtained elsewhere. That course has been followed by Irishmen in days gone by; and there is no reason why, if justice is to be continuously refused, that course should not be adopted again. It is for this House to consider whether the rising generation of Irishmen, if they have to be educated in Paris, Germany, Spain Rome, or elsewhere, would bring into Irish public life and Irish social life generally, an element which would be altogether satisfactory to the Government of this country from the point of view

of the Government itself. The question is a serious one and we are very sensible of the importance of it. We are also determined to deal with it at the earliest opportunity. The reasons why we feel so strongly upon this question are very simple and plain. It is recognised in Ireland generally, that this question of University education is not merely a rich man's question or one which merely affects a small section of the population, but it is also a poor man's question, a question which affects every section, every class, and every interest. Higher education is the very first necessity of progress, and almost I may say of existence in any civilised country in modern times. If it were only for the purpose of taking advantage of the limited opportunities which are afforded us now under the system of local government in Ireland, it is perfectly evident that university education is absolutely essential to meet the necessities of the country. In regard to our agriculture and all our economic and industrial questions, it is manifest that higher education is a first necessity under the conditions of modern life. It has come to be regarded that this grievance under which Irishmen labour is a universal grievance, and the feeling is that it is one in which every section of the Irish people has a deep and vital interest. In the course of this debate we may be asked questions as to the right of the Irish people to demand this university. I decline to argue the point, for it is simply ridiculous at this time of day to argue against the right of a people to be educated in their own country in their own way. It is recognised by every enlightened Government in the world that its first duty is to provide the fullest and amplest means of education for those over whom it rules, and the right of the Irish people to that I am not disposed to argue just now. The rulers of this Empire have a great and widespread responsibility, and it ought to appeal to their Imperial instincts to recognise their duties in this most important matter as far as the education of Irishmen is concerned. A very interesting Parliamentary paper was circulated yesterday in this House, and I would invite hon. Members interested in this question to study this Return. It gives a record of what has been done by foreign countries in connection with Catholic University education. I do not propose to g the details of this publication, but I draw attention to the facts of the c regard to one important and adv power. I will take the case of Prot Germany. The Government is Pr tant, and speaking generally, Germ a Protestant country. A most impo section of Germany is unquestio a Protestant section, and yet find that in the Protestant prov of Prussia you have four pu Catholic Universities, and in the whol Germany, governed by a Protes Government, there are no less than e State Catholic Universities. If Pro tant Germany can subsidise Cath universities without any great injury its Imperial progress or advancem why should England not take a lea of Germany's book and allow at least Catholic University to be established Ireland? If you examine into the of your own Empire you will find even in your own dependencies—in South Wales and Canada, for instan you have Catholic universities subsid by the State, and their existence in no interferes with the progress of t colonies or with your Imperial inte in either of those two great de dencies. On this question of sect universities might I ask the Hou consider how many universities you in England, Scotland, and Wales? any hon. Member inform me how m of those universities are not sectari the same sense in which an Irish Cat university could be held to be sectari namely, that the education imparte them is in sympathy with the reli convictions of the students? When come to discuss the question of tarianism in relation to your own un sities you must admit that the exis universities in England, Scotland, Ireland are quite as sectarian in character as a Catholic Unive for Ireland is supposed to be likel be. How then can there be any h in one Catholic University for Irel Protestant theology is taught in Oxf in Cambridge, in Edinburgh, in A deen. Why should Catholic theo not be taught in Dublin or Galway? Catholic theology is ta in Protestant Prussia. Why sh it not be taught in Catholic Irel Catholic theology is taught in the unive in Canada and in the university in

Sir T. G. Esmonde.

th Wales, and I have yet to learn any injury has come to the State allowing this teaching to be carried in either of these universities. How h force is there after all in this argu-nt? Let me remind the House what pened immediately after the conquest he Soudan. The very first thing you was to establish a Mussulman college university. The interests of the pire are not imperilled by the teaching Mussulman theology in Omdurman, why should they be imperilled the teaching of Catholic theology Dublin or Cork? It has been con-ded that the Catholics of Ireland could ve university education if they chose that they could go to Trinity College any of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland. e all know perfectly well that there is solutely no force in that argument. hese colleges are closed to Irish Catholics. atholic Ireland will never accept a niversity education from any of them, nd I think this House ought to be the ery first to recognise the strenuous sistence upon principle which Ireland akes in this matter. There is no use in elling us that we can have university ducation in colleges to which our people ill never go. The position for a wise overnment to take up would be to rovide such university education for the eople as would satisfy their wants and spirations. We shall be told possibly hat the present is not an auspicious time or raising this question. I think, how-ver, it is an extremely auspicious time. e have in office a Government which as a huge majority. Very important embers of that Government are in avour of the establishment of a Catholic niversity in Ireland, and I believe if the ank and file of the supporters of the overnment were canvassed it would be ound that the majority are in favour of uch a university. The Government ossess an enormous, an overwhelming najority, and as far as we can see it is ikely that the Government will maintain hat majority. I say, therefore, that there ould not be a better or a more auspicious ime for dealing with this question. If hose who believe in doing justice to Ire-and in this matter only have the courage f their convictions, the question can be ettled now. Surely it cannot be merely question of the money for establishing a atholic University in Ireland. There is nore money being spent in one week's fighting in South Africa than would cover the cost. I think that in meeting the strong wishes of the people of Ireland the Government would be acting wisely in an Imperial sense, and would be making one of the best possible political investments by helping to encourage higher education in Ireland. I beg, Sir, to second the motion.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'In the opinion of this House, the provision for Universities is totally inadequate, and none can be regarded as equitable which does not secure for the Roman Catholics of Ireland, equally with other members of the community, facilities for University Education without violence to their religious feeling,' instead thereof—(*Mr. J. P. Farrell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): The House has listened with pleasure to the exceedingly eloquent and temperate speeches of the mover and seconder of this Amendment, and while endeavouring to answer their arguments I will also endeavour to emulate the moderation with which they put forward their views. The first thing that surprised me in the speech of the hon. Baronet was that he quoted the Return which was issued the day before yesterday in support of his statement that every important country in the world had university education under sectarian influences. But I do not find that stated in the Return. Looking at the financial side of the question, the financial support given in any European country to any form of sectarian university education is excessively small. I should have wished if one or other of the hon. Gentlemen while condemning the present university system in Ireland had given some little explanation of what that system is. It was better from their point of view not to have entered fully into the facts of the present system, because if they had made such a statement their whole complaint would at once have been answered by it. I shallendeavour presently to lay before the House a very concise statement of the position of university education at this moment in Ireland, and I think it will prove that the supposed grievance of the Irish Roman Catholics is one entirely

of sentiment and religious intolerance, and not based on any practical hardship or grievance. We are asked to redress that sentimental grievance by doing, as I hope I shall be able to show, a social and educational grievance to Ireland. Hon. Members opposite say that Irish Roman Catholics cannot go to the present universities and colleges in Ireland. What they mean is that some Roman Catholics will not go to these universities and colleges. They are not prevented by any law for which this House is responsible, or which we can in any way alter. They are prevented by rules laid down by their spiritual pastors and masters over which this House has no control. The Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland do their very best to prevent Roman Catholic students going to these universities and colleges, and then they ask their representatives here to complain that so few go. From the tone of the debates on this question one would imagine that the position of affairs was that the English Government had at some time or another established out of State money, and had from time to time maintained out of State money, university institutions for Protestants in Ireland, but had all along refused, and still refused, to provide similar educational facilities for Roman Catholics. That is the view expressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but it is not founded on fact. I would remind the House that the State did not found and does not bear the expense of Trinity College. It did not do anything of the kind.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Who gave the Trinity College confiscated land?

*MR. GRANT LAWSON: If Trinity College is maintained by the State let the hon. and learned Member show any Vote of this House that will prove it. The hon. Members who proposed and seconded this Amendment spoke of the splendid opportunities for university education given to the people of England and Scotland. But they forgot the financial side of the question. They forgot that these universities were not provided by the State, but were endowed by private persons. The State did not supply one penny for these educational institutions. It is not equality, as the Amendment states, with other members of the community that is asked for. Ireland has equality in all matters of legislati in all matters of grants of money. inequality, it is a specially priv position which the Roman Cat in Ireland ask for. What is the p state of things in Ireland? Any dis will show that there are three univer in Ireland — Dublin University, Trinity College; the Royal Univ with the three affiliated Queen's Col which also acts as an examining bod students belonging to any schoo college in Ireland of every clas denomination; and the Catholic versity of Ireland. The Dublin Univ is unsectarian and not State suppo the Royal University is State supp and unsectarian, and the Catholic versity is provided for by pr effort, and is not supported by the S but is intensely sectarian. It has, ever, received large grants from the as far as regards one of its colleges College of Maynooth. Maynooth C received a building grant of £3 and in 1869 the contribution towa maintenance, which was always p this House, was commuted for a s over £360,000.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It was money. It was out of the Church

*MR. GRANT LAWSON: I ag was out of the funds of the Pro Church. The one instance of a se State-aided college in Ireland College of Maynooth for Roman Ca and it is the section of the com which enjoys the advantage of equality which comes to this H complain that the state of affairs equal. There is Trinity College, ever since 1793 has been open to Catholics. I should like to reac words from the University Tests (I Act of 1873, in order to show what r the enactment for which Parliame responsible in regard to Trinity C Dublin. In the first place, that A vides that students, graduates, te or holders of office are not to quired—

"To subscribe to any article or formu faith, or to make any declaration, or ta oath respecting his religious belief or sion, or to conform to any form of worship, or to do any act in connectio any form of public worship, or to belong specified church, sect, or denominatio shall any person be compelled in th

ersity or college to attend the public ship of any church, sect, or denomination which he does not belong."

Now, who were the "holders of office" to which this most tolerant Act applied? By another section of the Act they were, with the exception of the professorship or lectureship of Divinity, to include the—

"Professorship, assistant or deputy professorship, public readership, protectorship, lectureship, assistant lectureship, provostship, fellowship, studentship, tutorship, scholarship, exhibition";

and then the Act adds—

"Any other office not in this section specified payable out of the revenues of the university or college."

Now, could there be wider words than these? Is it possible to throw open a door to a university much wider than that? Catholic students do go to Trinity College, Dublin, it is admitted, without harm to their spiritual faith. The hon. Gentleman who proposed the Amendment said that some students had come out tainted through the Protestant atmosphere of Dublin University. [HON. MEMBERS: No!] Well, can any hon. member point to any Roman Catholic who has gone to that college and has come out tainted; or to any attempt to proselytise Roman Catholic students? It is said that there is a Protestant atmosphere about Trinity College; but this is not a chemical laboratory, and we are not charged here with the care of the atmosphere. So far as legislation is possible, we have thrown open the doors of Trinity College as widely as possible. I turn now to the Royal University of Ireland, which was established by Royal Charter in 1880 to take the place of the Queen's University—the change being specifically made in order to enable Roman Catholic students to compete for the degree of the Royal University without residence at the Queen's Colleges. Again, a wide open door was provided for Roman Catholics; and the Royal University was endowed with £20,000 from the Irish Church funds. It was said by the hon. Member for West Cavan that all the professors in the Queen's Colleges were Protestant.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: No; I did not say that. I said that the proportion of Protestant professors was greater in the Queen's Colleges than in the Royal University of Ireland.

*MR. GRANT LAWSON: The present Chief Secretary for Ireland was asked a question on this subject on March 15th, 1898, and, in reply, he said that—

"Of the Fellows, 19 are Roman Catholics in receipt of emoluments amounting to £6,168; 16 are Protestants of the different denominations, with emoluments amounting to £2,606."

Now, it should be noted that most of these Roman Catholic Fellows are professors in Roman Catholic seminaries, and that they receive £400 a year as professors in the Royal University, so that to that extent these Roman Catholic seminaries receive assistance indirectly from the State. On the other hand, the Protestant Fellows are all Queen's College professors, and, therefore, teachers in undenominational colleges. A word or two as to the State Endowed Queen's Colleges—Belfast, Cork, and Galway—which were founded by Royal Charter in 1845, by Sir Robert Peel's Conservative Government, "to afford all classes and denominations, without any distinction of religious creed whatever, an opportunity of pursuing a regular and liberal course of education." Any religious community might build halls of residence, appoint deans of residence, and found theological professorships in connection with these Queen's Colleges. The Chief Secretary said on March 15th, 1898, that the Presidents of Queen's Colleges at Cork and Galway were both Roman Catholics. So much for the professorships being monopolised by Protestants. He also said that of the 181 students at Cork, 98 were Roman Catholics; and of the 90 students at Galway, 36 were Roman Catholics. Looking at the returns for Galway, I find that the number of students from 1849-50 was 2,489, of which 1,048 were Roman Catholics, 711 members of the Church of Ireland, 618 Presbyterians, and 112 Wesleyans.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is that a sufficient number of Catholics?

*MR. GRANT LAWSON: I do not say it is a sufficient number; but the fact that the number is not greater is not to be laid to the charge of this House but to the Roman Catholic priesthood. I come to the Catholic University of Ireland, established in 1854, which consists of six colleges, including Maynooth. Now, that university has no power of granting

degrees, as it has no charter, but it sends up its students to the Royal University to receive their degrees. If this was a proposal that that Catholic University should receive a charter and become a degree-granting university, I should not oppose it. But this proposal is not a request for a charter; it is a holding up of the hands for cash. [An HON. MEMBER on the Irish benches: Our own cash.] I am quite aware that a 21st or a 35th, or some such infinitesimal fraction will be Irish cash, but the vast bulk of the money will be found by Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen. I believe if a charter were granted to that university out of that nucleus, and from the donations of pious Roman Catholic founders, a Roman Catholic University could be raised up to which no person could offer rational objection. There are two ideas of university education in the United Kingdom. There is the idea of our older universities in England and of Trinity College, Dublin, of a highly classical and mathematical and expensive education, and there is also the Scotch idea of university education, which is of a very much lower type than ours. [HON. MEMBERS: "No, no," and "Withdraw."] I am afraid I shall rouse the *perfervid ingenium* of my Scotch friends, but at any rate the Scotch universities provide an education of a somewhat lower class than the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. If the university education is narrow, then I do not think there will be a great many Roman Catholic students to go to it. It is misleading to count heads without considering what sort of heads they are. I doubt very much whether the proportion of Roman Catholics likely to make use of the class of education given in Oxford and Cambridge would be very large. But if you are thinking of a university education of a Scotch type a different state of affairs would come into play. Of that type there is now a university with an atmosphere not only undenominational in theory but in actual practice. We are told by my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury that this new university would be set up "under conditions." But what guarantee have we that these conditions will be carried out and adhered to? No doubt Parliament could keep their hands on the purse strings; but we could not recover the building grants; for it is proposed that we should build and keep up the university buildings out of public funds, and I doubt very much whether Pa ment would see its way to evic Roman Catholics out of the buildin the conditions were not fulfilled would here suggest that the Members should themselves bring Bill showing what it is they want, what conditions they are willing to I know that such a Bill would be o order, because it would create a charge; but, at any rate, it would a First Reading, and be printed at public expense, and we should see the conditions really are which they pose. These conditions are suppose re-assure Protestant parents; but I very much whether Protestant pare Ireland would have much faith in paper assurances. Roman Ca parents have the assurance of the e ence of many years that no endeavo been made to proselytise their s Trinity College and other unive [An IRISH MEMBER: They do n there.] But some go, and no cha been made that those who were proselytised, or attempted proselytised. It would be man years before Protestant parents have a similar assurance, by exp that if they sent their sons to th posed University no attempt wo made to proselytise them. The are you going to start this ne versity? My hon. friend speaks leaven of a certain amount in College; but where are you going the leaven in the case of the n versity—the corresponding Pro leaven to the Roman Catholic le Trinity College? If the propos university is to be unsectarian, tain that it is unnecessary, becaus are unsectarian colleges in Ireland present moment which are not n full use of as they might be; and i be sectarian, then I say that is a parture; it is a thing never done —a new departure which would into foolish extravagance. For State can find a university for Catholics, why not for all the ot nominations which exist in the Kingdom? All of them would from the State a similar privilege Protestant State it would be toler the State to endow a Protestant Uni but what is not tolerable is tha Protestant State the Government endow a university of which th

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raison d'etre would be hatred of the State religion. Having dealt with the religious aspect I will now say a word or two on the social and educational side of the question. Do hon. Members really think that the establishment of this new university would promote the interests of education in Ireland? Would it not be merely to set up another weak university, whose degrees would have no social or commercial value in any part of the world? It is better, in the interest of the youth of Ireland, that they should continue to study together. The one thing that ought to be encouraged in Ireland is that free intercourse between the young of different religions, so that friendship might be cemented. Are we to despair of doing that? This is a form of priestcraft, this putting up of the young in watertight compartments to prevent contamination. It is a doctrine created especially for Irish consumption, and does not extend to this side of the Channel. Roman Catholics in England go to Oxford or Cambridge, and the Pope allows them to. Ireland is a free country, and the Government ought not to consent to the doctrines laid down by the Irish priests. Suppose that the priesthood laid it down that no Roman Catholic should work for a Protestant employer, would the State have to find Roman Catholic employers? I have endeavoured to argue this matter from a political, social, and religious point of view. I began by saying this is a sentimental grievance, and if this is an attempt to satisfy a sentimental grievance, is there no sentiment on the other side worthy of consideration? The consciences of many people in this country would be grievously hurt by such a proposal, and those who with difficulty are upholding the Protestant banner in the south of Ireland would feel that they had been delivered over to their enemies.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): As I propose to vote for this resolution, I do not wish to give a silent vote, but to advance some of the reasons which permit me the unusual indulgence of voting in the same lobby with hon. Gentlemen opposite. The scheme of the First Lord of the Treasury to grant such a university as will satisfy the Roman Catholics of Ireland is practically the subject of discussion. Under that scheme the University is to have no test; all the endowments are to be free; and the governing body is to be so constituted and maintained that the Roman Catholics upon it will predominate. They are so to predominate that no money is to be given for ecclesiastical or philosophical teaching or for teaching in modern history, because these subjects would be taught under the limitations which are considered necessary by the Roman Catholic Church. Now, my first inclination was adverse to that scheme, because there was an air of unreality about it. If it were to answer its purpose it must be substantially a Roman Catholic University. Casual Protestants might be attracted to it by prospects of pleasant society, good teaching, or endowment, but they would be few. Then why not have a strictly denominational university? Why require this freedom from tests, and why throw open the endowments? The answer, I confess, is not easy to find. But this may be said — the scheme of the First Lord of the Treasury holds the field; it is acceptable to many who would not assent to a strictly denominational university; and, more important, it is acceptable to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and particularly to the Bishops. Lastly, the scheme represents the sort of university which an Irish Legislature would, under the Home Rule Bill, have been able to create. There are Gentlemen on the other side who were supporters of the Home Rule Bill, and yet strenuous opponents of the scheme of the First Lord of the Treasury. I would suggest to them that, if they would not rob the orchard themselves, they would be willing to provide the ladder and prop it against the wall. But there is a more real objection raised to the scheme. It is asked, Why should not the Roman Catholics of Ireland go to Trinity College and to the other colleges which are open to them without risk to their religious opinions? Irish Members must forgive those familiar with our English Universities if we have some difficulty in understanding the Irish position. In Oxford University toleration may be said to be absolute. There are there two private halls, one set up by the Jesuits—a large and growing institution—and a smaller one set up by the Benedictines; while Roman Catholics are scattered about the University in almost every college as Fellows, scholars, and commoners. It is no wonder, therefore, at the first blush

that we should be surprised that there should be this desire for a separate University. I myself have taught Roman Catholics, and have examined them without finding either my faith or theirs injuriously affected. I wish with all my heart that Irishmen would go to the universities, where men of different creeds might learn to understand each other. But we must take them as we find them, and, as I understand, there is so rooted an antagonism between the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland and the Protestantism of the Irish Church, as to make the Irish Roman Catholic think it impossible that he could safely send his son to Trinity College. What, then, is to be said to this people who at the present moment, owing to their religious convictions, are destitute of university education, and who can only get it by the foundation of such a university as I have described? Are we to say to a hungry man, in whom we are bound to take an interest, "Either you shall dine at my table or you shall starve"? It is said that there is a great and sacred principle which prevents the endowment of a denominational university, the principle State money should not be spent for denominational purposes. This principle may furnish a good working rule, but I should require something of much higher authority to prevent me from according to the Irish Roman Catholics the opportunities which a university education gives. I notice that we never enforce our principles with a more Spartan severity than when we enforce them at the expense of other people; and never in a more unamiable character than in the effort to exclude others from the enjoyment of advantages which we ourselves possess. What was the result of the present state of things? The right hon. Member for Dublin University said in debate, in 1898, that out of 3,250,000 Roman Catholics in Ireland there were only 300 Roman Catholic students in the colleges. That shows that the Roman Catholics in Ireland are starved as to university education. The right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs said in the same debate that he, and other Irish Secretaries, had been frequently obliged to pass over Roman Catholics for appointments because they did not enjoy the same educational advantages as Protestants. If we wish the administration of Ireland to be conducted sympathetically and cordially, how can we get what we want when the great mass of the pop[illegible] are excluded from any prospect [illegible] pointments for want of the educ[illegible] advantages enjoyed by the Pro[illegible] minority? There is another evil [illegible] tangible, but none the less real. I [illegible] seen it dwelt upon by the First L[illegible] the Treasury. Although compara[illegible] few of the great bulk of the com[illegible] are able to enjoy the benefits of [illegible] versity education, yet the influen[illegible] university education upon those few [illegible] a penetrating and stimulating infl[illegible] which is felt by all classes with w[illegible] they came in contact, and if the hig[illegible] and most liberal form of education [illegible] off from the bulk of the community [illegible] intellectual life of that community [illegible] thereby impoverished and retarded. [illegible] may say that in voting for this resolu[illegible] I am going back from the beliefs and tr[illegible] tions which I have maintained ever [illegible] entered university life. I have alw[illegible] maintained in the strongest way t[illegible] universities ought to be open and t[illegible] endowments free, that the advance [illegible] learning should not be fettered and [illegible] peded by any anxieties as to the immed[illegible] or temporary effect of the new knowledg[illegible] or should seem to conflict with the religi[illegible] truths in which I have been brought u[illegible] But this is a case in which it seems to [illegible] that I must be prepared to put m[illegible] traditions and convictions on one sid[illegible] If the Irish Roman Catholics are [illegible] willing to have any university educatio[illegible] but an education which must be given b[illegible] a practically denominational university, [illegible] would say to them, "Take the risks a[illegible] the responsibilities; we put the matter i[illegible] your hands; it is for you to give you[illegible] children the best education which you[illegible] religious convictions allow"; and I wou[illegible] grant their denominational university [illegible] frankly and heartily as I shall vote f[illegible] the resolution to-night.

*Mr. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarv[illegible] shire, Arfon): I am very sorry that a speak[illegible] who preceded me used terms of repro[illegible] in dealing with this grievance from wh[illegible] Ireland has been suffering. He led [illegible] to believe that Ireland was the m[illegible] splendidly endowed of all countr[illegible] in Europe with regard to edu[illegible] tion, and he asked, Why do Catholics [illegible] go to Trinity College, which is open [illegible] them? You might as well ask, Why [illegible] Catholics not go to the Protest[illegible] Church, which is open to them?

ked that Catholics in England found difficulty in entering Protestant universities. Well, there is this difference. England the Catholics are a sect; in and Catholics are practically the on. But let us look at these questions as they are. I am a Protestant of Protestants, believing as firmly as any in the principles of Protestantism, I yield to no man in this House in adherence to those principles. In tion to being a Protestant I am onconformist Free Churchman; but I ve also in the intellectual and critical lts of the Protestant Reformation, as l as the religious and ethical advanes it has given to us, and my reason standing up to speak on this occasion a Free Churchman is to see if we not possibly remove, to some slight gree, the *non possumus* and the inflexible titude taken by some ultra-Protestants this question. I have always believed a free, nonsectarian, and undenomitional university. I still believe in t, but can you force such an ideally ree institution on Catholic Ireland? Let me first of all ask, have you such an deal institution in the most Protestant ountry in Europe? Have you that free nstitution in England or in Scotland? We have in Wales. In Wales we have an approach to the most perfect system of a free, democratic, unsectarian university, and we are proud of it. But what about England? It is true that in Oxford and Cambridge you have no tests, but it is not true that you have no chapels of the Episcopalian established denomination there. In every college you have a chapel which belongs to one section of the Protestant community. More than that, you have professorships of divinity and theology endowed, and the professors who fill these chairs, and fill them in the most distinguished way, belong exclusively to one church. No Nonconformist can hold theological chairs in either Oxford or Cambridge universities. They are filled by members of the Church of England and by members of that Church alone. The same thing applies to Fellows of Divinity. No Nonconformist, no Jew, no Roman Catholic need apply for a Divinity Fellowship. Take Scotland again, and surely we are proud of the Scottish universities. In Wales we are proud of them, for it was to them we sent Nonconformist students when Oxford and Cambridge had not abolished tests. But even in Scotland, where you have practically the best trained intellect in Europe, the universities are not free from this sectarian taint. All the Divinity Faculties in all the four universities of Scotland are entirely in the hands of one church—the Presbyterian Established Church—and that to the exclusion, I venture to say, of the most distinguished theological scholars in Scotland. Just think of scholars like Dr. Davidson, the late Dr. Bruce, Dr. Marcus Dods, and Professor George Adam Smith, shut out from teaching in the Scottish universities. So in Protestant Scotland after enjoying the full effect of humanism and the Reformation, the universities are not quite the ideal institutions we would wish them to be. Is it fair then to apply the ideal principle to Ireland—Catholic Ireland? Is it fair to make Catholic Ireland a virgin soil to plant your ideal and reformed university? Again let us look at the primary education of England. You have Church of England and Wesleyan schools, and you have for the training of primary school teachers colleges which are for the most part denominational. In Scotland, again, all the training colleges are denominational. But what about Wales? In Wales we have a wholly free, democratic university. Therefore, that will not lend itself very much to my argument. We had at Lampeter, before the establishment of the University of Wales, a teaching institution for higher education. It was controlled by the Church of England. Tests were abolished, and it opened its doors to laymen as well as to those seeking holy orders. Did Nonconformists send their sons there? Not at all, except a Nonconformist parent here and there who desired his son to become a priest of the Anglican Church. Therefore the Welsh nation, the Nonconformists, were panting for equality of opportunity. They got it first of all by the establishment of Aberystwyth College. When that college was founded, who became the head of it? Do you think for a moment that the Welsh Nonconformists, through their delegates and scholars—those who had their fingers on the pulse of the national life—elected a Churchman to be head of the university? They elected the most distinguished theological scholar modern Wales has produced—the late Dr. Thomas

Charles Edwards. He it was who endeared the college to the hearts of the Welsh Nonconformist nation. By appointing such a man at the head of the college they gave it a complexion and flavour which was congenial to the Welsh people. To the success of Aberystwyth College was due the foundation of the two other similar institutions at Bangor and Cardiff, and ultimately the obtaining of the Charter of our Welsh University. These three colleges—the constituents of the university — educate the sons and daughters of all classes, rich and poor alike. Take the statistics of Aberystwyth College. You will find one-third of the students, males and females, are from the labouring and artisan class. More than half belong to the homes of the peasantry. So we have here a university which practically takes hold of the whole people, and contributes intellectually to the Empire. We are beginning even to send teachers from Wales to Scotland. Now let us turn to Catholic Ireland. What have we there among people who believe in the Church as the religious authority, a different thing altogether to what Welsh Nonconformists believe? The question of university and higher education must, as regards Ireland, be approached from a different point of view. The Catholic Bishops of Ireland say that they claim nothing but equality of treatment, and here I agree with them. I know that the defenders of Trinity College will say "Trinity College is a great historical institution. It has produced the most distinguished Irish scholars, and it has most distinguished professors." All the professors are Protestants; all the fellows, I believe, are likewise Protestants; the vast majority of the students are Protestants, six or seven per cent. only are Catholics. Its Provost is certainly one of the most cultured scholars, but he is also a famous Protestant controversialist, who has contrived by his writings to irritate the minds of his Catholic fellow Christians. He has called them by the offensive name of "Romanists," and has termed their religion and doctrines "Romish." Surely you cannot expect Roman Catholic parents to send their sons with impunity to such a college. But apart from that, the college chapel, where there is a daily service, is Protestant and Episcopalian. The whole institution is Protestant in its atmosphere. I think Catholic Ireland de better treatment at the hand Protestants than that. I believe authorities of Trinity College are much to blame for the er grievances and wrongs in connection Catholic education. If they had i preted Protestantism from the hig point of view they would have done with some of the exclusiveness of t institution, and would have invited t Catholic fellow Christians to har and union with them in that institu They have not done that. [An H MEMBER: Yes, they have.] At period Irish scholars were the in Europe. Justice has not b done their labours and influence British writers and historians. W have weighty German, French, and Ital writers, who understand what the Ir monks did from the fifth century o the eleventh, not merely in Ireland, S land, and England, but on the Contin where they were pioneers of learning sowed the seed of that civilisation ripe culture enjoyed by Germany Switzerland in our time. How is it Catholic Ireland fails to come into p union with the Protestants of Ulste with the English Government tha been behind that Protestant prov I think you will learn a lesson fro history of Wales. In Wales we ar only believers in our nationality, bu in the Empire which, through the T we helped to build, for the Tudor Welsh blood in them. The Tud their turn sympathised with the people. Under their auspices juste flourished, the Bible was translate Welsh. The Reformation sprea means of Welsh scholars. There no attempt to suppress the lan and the literature loved by the p Anyone who knows anything Celtic literature knows that the Protestant Reformation and Ireland thought very much lived very much alike, worsh very much alike. The Tudor dy changed all that. We have become P tants and loyal to the Empire. It remains Catholic, and has often be rebellion. Why? Because the T and other rulers forced upon the p measures which alienated their pathies. Their motive may have right, but their method was hope wrong. They employed Englishm

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everything, and Englishmen did not understand the Celtic mind. Irishmen are above all practical. They generous in act and deed when have seen how to act. The are generous in thought. Is way to plant religious educational ing? The Reformation was forced them by an adventitious growth. cannot cultivate the religious and lectual life of a nation by artificial and n methods. That must have its source mind and heart of the people themes. It is said that Ireland is still a -ridden nation. If it be so, what our remedy? Is it to deny her ren the advantages and blessings a university education, and to er them impatient under the rivation of their natural rights? love of Irishmen for education can- be denied. Under the most detestable al laws hedge-schools were kept when open regular schools was forbidden. at fine and good man, Cardinal New- an, did his utmost for Catholic educa- on, but was crippled in his endeavour. r. Gladstone failed to surmount the ob- tacle. They do not demand or desire a Roman Catholic University, but a Uni- ersity where Catholic youth may enter without any conscientious scruple. There would be no tests, therefore it would be open to Protestants. There might be a great deal of obscurantism about the training. I wish I could say there was no obscurantism about our Protestantism. The Catholic youth in such a university would be taught, according to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, no theology. There would not be the endowment of any Catholic chair. They would be taught Latin, Greek, literature, modern languages, science, mathematics, medicine, and law. I ask, in all seriousness, would the House believe for a moment that if you have a generation of Irish youth taught these subjects they could not penetrate with a flash of their imagination the obscurantism of the hierarchy of any religious body? We believe now that the time has come to plant a university for Catholics in Ireland alongside Trinity College. What would be one practical result? You would have a healthy rivalry and strong competition between the Catholic educated youths and Protestants for the Civil Service. I have often heard the Irish Secretary say that Catholic youths failed to pass the Civil Service examinations because they were not as efficiently trained in knowledge and higher education as Protestants. Remove the grievance and bring the best of the Catholic youth of Ireland to compete with the best of the Protestants. That is one way to make Ireland loyal and happy. We have recently rejoiced a great deal in Irish valour. We have seen the wearing of the shamrock, and Her Majesty the Queen is about to visit Ireland. Are these insignificant signs? I believe these signs can touch the nation into finer issues. I hope the British nation, through Parliament, will in this matter of higher and university education take measures to help Irishmen to get out of their exclusiveness and their national barrier, and enable them to compete with the rest in promoting the harmony and solidarity of the Empire.

*MR. LECKY (Dublin University): The House will not be surprised that I should make a few remarks on the very severe criticisms which the hon. Member who has just spoken has made with regard to Trinity College—criticisms for which I contend there is no historical justification. As far back as 1793—long before the universities in England—Trinity College threw open her degrees to Roman Catholics. One of the strongest and most able men who ever advocated Catholic emancipation was Lord Plunket, who was her representative. In 1854 the University founded a number of non-foundation scholarships, free from all religious disabilities. In 1867, at the expresss request of the University of Dublin, a number of important professorships were thrown open to Roman Catholics. Then, in 1873, came the great Emancipation Act, connected with the name of Mr. Fawcett, by which every post of emolument, honour, and power in Trinity College, from the highest to the lowest, with the single exception of the divinity professorships, was thrown open to the Roman Catholics without restriction. I contend that against a university which can show such a record as that, the charge of bigotry is one which cannot be sustained. It is said that Roman Catholics cannot go to that university. My answer to that is that, with the exception of

O'Connell, there is hardly a single illustrious Roman Catholic Irish layman who has not been an *alumnus* of it. Nearly all the Roman Catholic Judges on the Irish Bench have been educated in Trinity College. The same may be said of Lord Morris in the Court of Appeal. The present Lord Chief Justice of England has been through it, and I might, I believe, add to the list the eloquent and brilliant orator who now leads the united Irish party opposite. It has been said, too, that our university has not been in touch with Irish life and literature. Here, again, surely it is a sufficient answer to say that we have a professor of Irish; that we have another professor who is the first living authority about the Brehon law, and that by far the larger proportion of those distinguished in Celtic literature have been through the University of Dublin. There is Bishop Reeves, one of the greatest Celtic scholars who has ever lived; there is Professor Stokes, who has written one of the best books on Celtic ecclesiastical history; there are Dr. Todd, Bishop Graves, and many others. If Catholics are prepared to accept the system of mixed undenominational education without any teaching of their own religion our education is absolutely pure. No one can possibly discover anything in the course at Trinity College which is in any single way contradictory to the Roman Catholic faith. As far as the mixed education is concerned, it is perfectly open to Roman Catholics of the present day. I will go further. We have appointed a Presbyterian professor to teach the Presbyterian students their own religion, and it is an open secret—indeed it is not secret at all—that the University has long been perfectly ready to appoint a Catholic professor to teach Catholic students their own divinity if they would only accept it; while if there were a sufficient number, I do not believe that there would be the slightest difficulty in obtaining a chapel for them. My own belief about this question is that there is in Ireland no want of provision for a mixed education for the benefit of Roman Catholics. If mixed education is accepted at all by them, Trinity College will give it in the best and fullest form, and without the smallest interference with their faith. If they do not wish to go to Trinity College, there are the Queen's Colleges, two of which are in the very heart of Catholic Ireland, both of which a very short time ago had Cat at their head, and which have a proportion of Catholic students. As as the atmosphere goes, it of c depends greatly on the students. We unfortunately, not many Roman Cat in Trinity College, though we have than has been stated by hon. Gentl opposite. The number, on the aver about from 8 per cent. to 10 cent. of the students. But this is because every effort possible had made by the bishops for years past to vent Roman Catholics from going in I cannot say I like the scheme which right hon. Gentleman the First Lord Treasury brought forward. I cannot like it, because I do not think it gether a genuine one. It is meant provide a mixed undenominati education, with the whole gover body Catholic. I believe this must into a purely sectarian education. hon. friend the Member for Oxford U versity said it would be practically sectar for my own part I should prefer it b openly and avowedly so. I believe there a certain number of persons in Ireland absolutely refuse to go into any co which is not completely under the a dency of their bishops. If they are gratified at all, I should like it to be by an institution purely and fr sectarian. Speaking for myself, I not the least hesitation in s that I wish such an institution t liberally endowed. The type of op represented by this Roman Catholic is one which is exceedingly well kno over the Continent. All over the tinent the bishops of that church have demanding the ascendency over univ education, though they have not succ in obtaining it. And in this conn the Parliamentary Return just publ and entitled "Reports from Her Maj representatives abroad of the pro made in foreign countries for the versity education of Roman Catholi one of the most instructive and int ing Returns on this subject I have read, and I hope every Member c House will carefully examine and it. As far as I can see, there are different types of university have been set up in the pri Roman Catholic countries. In a number of these countries univ education is completely and absol secularised. The Returns say that

and that the educationalists
are now placed in a position
as that of the educationalists
and Scotland. Then what
do? Does he say to the
England and Scotland, "Go
likewise"? No! He points
which still remain at
Cambridge, and instead of
him the ideal which has
some of us for many years,
the lowering of the flag of
liberty, and submitting to what
the inevitable. Instead of
institutions in such a
he himself would like to
he recommends Liberal
to set up sectarian
where, in which all the
which he has been fighting
will be reproduced and
I am sorry to part com
him, friend, but I intend
the ideal which he thinks
be realised, and I hope to
associated with those
by the victories
will persist in the
these sectarian barriers
are broken down
equality everywhere
speeches of the mover and
this motion gave us, I
complain of in regard
their tone. The com-
of them is that which
last session, namely, that
taken it for granted
side to this question;
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College, Queen's Col-
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there is an one
institutions. Nei-

Roman Catholics in the learned professions. We must also remember the divinity students. Roman Catholic divinity students were already amply provided for at Maynooth. Maynooth had an endowment of £26,000 a year up to the time of the disendowment of the Established Church, and it then received a large grant of not very far short of £400,000, on the interest of which a college is supported. In fact, Roman Catholic divinity students are practically educated at the expense of the English Government. This very considerably diminishes the number for whom university education is demanded. A great deal has been said about our divinity school in Trinity College. It is a school which does not in the least affect anybody who is not going into the Church of Ireland. It corresponds with the very much more largely endowed divinity school which exists at Maynooth. The divinity professors at Trinity College have no part whatever in the government of the university. It is quite true that our present Provost, who is one of the most versatile and brilliant men I have ever met, was at one time a divinity professor; but it was not because he was a divinity professor that he was made Provost, but because he is one of the most eminent mathematical scholars in Europe. Our divinity students simply consist of those who are going into the Church of Ireland, and the college lends them its lecture-room. We wish the connection between the divinity school and the university to last, partly, no doubt, for financial reasons, because the divinity fees are rather more than is required for the payment of the divinity professors, but also for another reason. One of the first principles of the Roman Catholic Church, which has been again and again brought forward in the debates about Maynooth, is that their priests ought to be educated entirely apart from laymen. There is a great speech of Mr. Shiel's which I dare say many hon. Members have read, on the subject of the endowment of Maynooth, in which he put this necessity in the strongest possible way. In our Church we take exactly the opposite view. In the Church of Ireland it is felt in the strongest way that it is desirable that our ministers shall have the best purely secular education which the country can afford, and we think it exceedingly desirable that in their youth they should mix with members ima for other professions and of other de nations. We think that this is not only for the ministers themselves, but fo university also. Those who are going the sacred profession, presumedly rep a higher average level of moral cha than others, and we believe that it i exceedingly good thing both for th selves and their fellow students that should, during the whole of their resi in Trinity College, be in constant co with men who are going into other fessions and with men of other op and denominations. With regard t divinity school, some Roman Cat have been talking of it as if it des the undenominational character of o versity, and was a danger to their My answer is that no member o faith ever goes into the divinity sc is ever expected to go there, an therefore no such danger exists. perfectly true that members o denominations may be taught matics and classics at another hou day in the same hall in which students have been taught befor am not aware that the earlier leaves any dangerous microbes be I refer to this subject also because it is a favourite idea with a certain of Nonconformists, who are ver opposed to a Catholic Univer secularise, as they call it, Trinity by driving the divinity school o What I want to impress on th hold this idea is that by doing may undoubtedly do some harm Church of Ireland, and considerab to Trinity College itself, whic possibly be gratifying to some the minds, but they will not take a step towards settling this Irish tion or reconciling Roman C As far as mixed education goes, y not improve very much upon the state of things, unless you ge Trinity College, and, I believe, Colleges also, would be perfectly to give—namely, some teachers t Roman Catholics their own A great many Roman Catholics this position. It is not me the past that eminent Roman C have gone to Trinity College a Queen's Colleges. There are Catholics at Trinity College no there are many more at the Colleges, while there are also

go to Oxford and Cambridge, are quite as undenominational and sectarian as our university, and who, my hon. friend the Member for Oxford University has said, get on there perfectly and without the slightest danger of their faith or of doing harm either their neighbours or themselves. I believe there is a discontented residuum. There are a certain number of persons in Ireland who, not I think spontaneously, but in consequence of the dictation of their priests, ask for something more, who want to have some kind of college which is more completely and entirely in its secular teaching dominated by their own ecclesiastics. Catholics have this at Louvain, but they could not get any State endowment for it. We are more liberal. We do give indirectly a certain endowment, and by doing that I think we have very much conceded the principle. I hope the time may come when the Nonconformist conscience will come to the conclusion that a little more money so spent would be extremely good economy, and would go far to settle the question. I am quite aware that I have got very much into the bad books of some of my most distinguished Roman Catholic friends by advocating any sectarian Roman Catholic University or college, and everybody who knows what is the real opinion of a large number of the Roman Catholic gentry knows that they look with horror upon such a system. I believe, however, that a good many Irishmen desire it. And for my own part I think that a small expenditure—I do not think a large expenditure would be required, for I do not believe that the students would be very numerous—on a purely sectarian establishment would be extremely good economy, and, on the whole, beneficial.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I listened to the speech of the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire with surprise, in the first place because of its extreme pessimism, and, secondly, because of its inconsistency. My hon. friend is one of a band of young Welshmen who have been engaged in the educational struggle of the last few years which has had the splendid result he has described to-night. He has told us that Wales has its undenominational university, and that the educationalists of Wales are now placed in a position far superior to that of the educationalists of England and Scotland. Then what does he do? Does he say to the Liberals of England and Scotland, "Go thou and do likewise"? No! He points to the inequalities which still remain at Oxford and Cambridge, and instead of keeping before him the ideal which has been guiding some of us for many years, he advocates the lowering of the flag of religious equality, and submitting to what he regards as the inevitable. Instead of putting those institutions in such a position as he himself would like to have them, he recommends Liberal educationalists to set up sectarian institutions elsewhere, in which all the evils against which he has been fighting in Wales will be reproduced and perpetuated. I am sorry to part company with my hon. friend, but I intend to adhere to the ideal which he thinks cannot possibly be realised, and I hope to continue to be associated with those who, encouraged by the victories of the past, will persist in the fight until all these sectarian barriers in national institutions are broken down and perfect religious equality everywhere prevails. The speeches of the mover and the seconder of this motion gave us, I think, nothing to complain of in regard to their temper or their tone. The complaint which I make of them is that which I ventured to make last session, namely, that they appear to have taken it for granted that there is only one side to this question; that there are no serious objections, and that nothing more has to be done in order to secure the fulfilment of their designs than to overcome the timidity of the First Lord of the Treasury, and, possibly, the bigotry of English Nonconformists. According to the statements of the mover and the seconder of the motion the Roman Catholics of Ireland have no educational advantages whatever. They objected to Trinity College, Queen's Colleges, and the Royal University, and they even extended their grievance from Ireland to Scotland, and said that the universities there were Presbyterian. I am one of those who deny that the great inequalities which have been described in such general terms actually exist. The mover of the Resolution will not deny the fact that there is an open door to all these institutions. Neither

would he deny that a considerable number of members of the party to which he belongs have availed themselves of the advantages offered by the Queen's Colleges, Trinity College, and the Royal University. But what does he say in reply to that fact? He says that those who have availed themselves of these advantages have been evading their religious responsibilities. Those who are so censured will have something to say in their defence, for they may ask, how is it that a generation ago Roman Catholics did avail themselves of these institutions, and how is it that the objections which are now urged were not then urged when the Roman Catholics in considerable numbers entered these institutions? The objection to Catholics being educated in these institutions is quite a modern idea, and it fully explains this demand for a Roman Catholic University. The time was when the heads of the Roman Catholic Church were not so adverse to the policy of mixed education. The policy of the present generation of Catholic bishops differs from that of their predecessors, for they have put a ban upon these institutions, and large numbers of Roman Catholics have ceased to attend them. There is one point to which I wish to call special attention, and that is that those who are demanding this university in Ireland are asking for something which does not exist anywhere else, either in this or any other country. To illustrate this fact I wish to call attention to a document to which the hon. Baronet made a very slight allusion. I am referring to the paper placed in the hands of hon. Members of the House within this last week. So far back as 1897 the Foreign Secretary requested our representatives in foreign countries to send a Report upon university education. I am sorry that the Report has been so long in coming, for it would have been very convenient if it had been in our hands many months earlier. This Report contains descriptions from our own representatives of the state of things which exists in regard to the university education of Roman Catholics in twenty-two foreign countries, and the result is a most remarkable one; for it appears from the statements made by our representatives that Roman Catholic Universities created and endowed by the State and controlled by ecclesiastics exist nowhere. I was surprised to hear the hon. Baronet speak of six State institutions in Germany which he said were Catholic institutions. In the Report on university education in foreign countries I find the following passage, contained under the head of "Prussia"—

"No special arrangements exist in Prussia for the university education of Roman Catholics as such, except in regard to the study of Roman Catholic theology. The institutions in the Prussian State in which academical teaching is given admit all students who are otherwise duly qualified without distinction of creed."

The writer goes on to say that special provision is made for the teaching of Catholic theology in certain universities which he names, and I am bound, in candour, to add that in those universities special provision is made for the benefit of the Roman Catholic Church, so far as the faculty of theology is concerned. The authorities of the Roman Church have something in the nature of a veto upon the appointment of theological professors, and they have certain powers of supervision. But all these foreign universities are, apparently, free from ecclesiastical control, and are open to the holders of various religious creeds, and there is no evidence that the Roman Catholic laity are forbidden to attend these institutions. The Catholic atmosphere which we are asked to create in Ireland does not exist so far as these mixed institutions are concerned. Having in view these facts, I am justified in saying that those who are demanding the creation of a State-endowed university for the special benefit of Roman Catholics are asking for something which does not exist elsewhere, either in this or any other land. On the general question I wish to say that I oppose this motion, not because I am a Protestant or a Protestant Nonconformist; for my objection would be just as strong if a proposal were to be made for the creation of a university on behalf of the body to which I happen to belong, or on behalf of any other Nonconformist body. I am opposed in principle to a sectarian university, no matter in what interest it may be asked for. It seems to me that sectarianism is opposed to the very idea of a university, for the two terms are incompatible, and just in proportion as you introduce the sectarian element into these institutions you diminish their university character. In the next place,

among those who continue to be strenuously opposed to the principle of separate as distinguished from mixed education. I need not express opinions of own upon this point, because there is abundance of authorities in support that view. The right hon. Gentleman the member for Dublin University made a remarkable speech in the year 1897 upon this question. He has himself described it as a half-hearted speech in favour of the proposal before the House. In my opinion, three-fourths of the speech was dead against the creation of a Catholic University, and only one-fourth in favour of the proposal. In the course of that speech, the right hon. Gentleman said that there could be no greater misfortune for Ireland than that the members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions, in their early days, should be entirely separated. In saying that the right hon. Gentleman only repeated what had been said upon former occasions. Mr. Isaac Butt issued a pamphlet some years ago in which he strenuously objected to separate education, and in that pamphlet there is a passage which I will quote, from an authority, which I am sure will have weight with hon. Gentlemen from the sister isle. Mr. Butt, in his pamphlet upon "The Problem of Irish Education," published in 1875, quotes from a pamphlet issued by Dr. Woodlock, the rector of the Catholic University, in which the doctor then wrote—

> "In a mixed community, such as exists in these countries, it is of the greatest moment that the university stamp should not be one which would almost estrange the bearer and cut him off from his fellow countrymen, either by his own act or by their unwillingness to admit the value of this coinage; the literary and scientific coin should be such as would run current throughout the realm, because its value would be known to all. In other words, it is most important for the social interests of Catholics that the university degree borne by them should be a *bona fide* mark of distinction won in open competition with their fellow countrymen of all denominations, and not the result of a hole-and-corner examination, and the fruit of work done under the inspection of a few Catholic teachers approved and awarded by them, and of the value of which others would know little or nothing. It is also of the greatest importance that the true intellectual value of Catholic education should be publicly approved and recognised by all."

I can add nothing to that weighty declaration, which I think must have some weight with the hon. Members who come from the other side of the Channel. There is one other point to which I wish to make reference. In my opinion this is a retrograde proposal which is now before the House. Both Houses of Parliament, in passing a measure for the abolition of sectarian tests at Oxford and Cambridge, may not have thoroughly carried out the principle they affirmed, but in passing those measures they did affirm the principle that national institutions should be national in spirit and in aim. I quite admit it was an imperfect measure, and admit the force of the statements made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire; but our policy, as far as education is concerned, should be to continue along the road we have been marching for years past; instead of taking a step back and calling into being an institution which may advance the interests of a particular church; whereas the object of a university should be to further the interests of learning and promote the social well-being of the country.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I have listened with pleasure to the able and weighty speeches which have been delivered on this subject. The question before the House is one of the greatest importance, and it has been argued year after year with great success in this House. The principle is one which has been supported by all classes of Irish society and Irish opinion, and it is a principle which is backed by the whole body of the Irish people and the Irish priesthood. The clearness and the temperateness of the arguments which have been advanced have every year been gaining ground and gathering support on this side. We have heard this Catholic University called by many hard names. We have heard it called a bribe to Ireland, a dole to the Catholics, and a sop to the Nationalists; but I do not think we need care very much about these names. They are phrases which have been ransacked from the library of ancient prejudice. I know that this claim is supported by the bulk of the Irish people through the voice of their elected representatives, and I know that they passionately long for opportunities for this higher education, so long as these can be obtained without injury to the faith of their fathers. It is therefore the duty of the Government to

encourage aspirations such as these, and it is the duty of all of us who value the higher education of the people to share with our neighbours that which we have got for ourselves. The retort has been made by the hon. Member who has just sat down that such educational advantages are already within the reach of Catholics. That is literally true, though practically it is false. If I want to rescue something from a fire I have to pass through the flames, but if I find the flames are so intense that I cannot reach my treasure, it might just as well be hundreds of miles away. So it is with Roman Catholic education at the present time in Ireland. What has been the position for the last fifty years? It has been one of admirable toleration on the part of Trinity College, Dublin, and Queen's College. They have thrown their doors open to all and sundry, and as a result brilliant Irish scholars have issued constantly from those colleges. Although that is so, yet the vital and underlying principle is left untouched. The priesthood is profoundly opposed to the Protestant atmosphere which exists there, and as a consequence the people obedient to their religion are still left craving for higher education. But having said that, I do not think this confession solves the difficulty at all. It is our duty here, and it is the duty of Irish Members opposite, to look fifty years forward and not fifty years backward. Are we content to see the brains of young Ireland wither and perish for want of proper nourishment, or shall we cast aside the remnants of our ancient prejudice and give them the facilities for which they ask? I should not fear the consequences of such action, for although our fathers may blame us now for supporting this motion, that will be nothing to the blame of our sons for resisting this claim. Surely we, as Unionists, have a special duty in the matter. We have refused Home Rule to Ireland and we have said that we are able to deal with Ireland and with Irish necessities. Here is a want, and here is a necessity, and how are we dealing with it? Year after year we have met it with an annual shrug of the shoulders, and a few somewhat antiquated observations upon the power of the Pope; yet all this time we are boasting of the self-government we are giving to Ireland. That local self-government has not a ghost of a chance so long as we are stifling the education o Catholics. We wish to fill Irish with educated Irishmen; these me be Roman Catholics, of course; the your demand, where is your supply! may I say one word which I am afrai often been said before upon the two objections? It is said that Ireland gain something which is not gran England, and will be subjected to exceptional treatment. It is within recollection of the House that Ireland been subjected to exceptional trea which has been justified by circumsta but if ever circumstances demanded ceptional treatment those circums are before us now in this debate. land, Scotland, and Wales desired denominational education, and they it; Ireland demands denomina education and I think that the circ stances justify the demand, and Ire ought to have it. Of course there is usual outcry against Roman Ca licism. We are told that Roman Ca licism is going to be fostered by p funds and that a great and serious da may be expected therefrom. I think an outcry comes from gentlemen o ceedingly nervous temperaments, they appear to forget that three-four Irish elementary schools, the indu schools, to say nothing of Maynoot denominational. I cannot imagine serious danger such nervous p contemplate in granting a charter Roman Catholic University. I can say, that in my mind there is far g danger in the cruelty of depriv student in his early manhood of religious atmosphere which has be guide and stay from childhood. A afraid of proselytising if we est a university under Roman Ca auspices? Why, we know that T College and Queen's Colleges thrown their doors open to all, an they are open to capture now. H does not record that any attemp been made to capture them b Catholics of Ireland. The represent of Irish Universities are in favour o motion; but I do not think it re very much imagination to picture t when the power of Irish intellect w in its strength, and ask for shel some university, and, finding none, lay siege to Dublin University effect its capture. Let it no supposed that this question whic

now debating is of exclusive interest this country and Ireland. The ish Empire holds many creeds, it boasts that it gives freedom to all. Many thousands—possibly ons—of Her Majesty's subjects are olics; and you may be sure that debate is being closely watched by whom this Parliament is synonymous freedom of thought and education. member very well last year, when I a visit to my native city of Quebec, ing long and interesting conversations h the French and English statesmen so grandly uphold our rule in that minion. Constantly we talked upon question of Roman Catholic educa- and upon the reluctance of the otestant Parliament to grant it; and may as well know it, have felt the r and had the rooted idea that we con- lered Roman Catholics less loyal than rselves. They pointed me to Laval niversity; I saw their priesthood ithin the precincts of Laval; among the dians in the backwoods, on the rivers nong the *voyageurs*. Everywhere the rest religion, the widest instruction, e most earnest devotion to the Queen d the Flag. I point you to-day to aval, to the French Canadians, from r Wilfrid Laurier to the humblest *bitant*; to the love of Empire that those oman Catholics have shown, and I ask at their idea of slur may be uprooted the favourable action of this Parlia- ent. In the West Indies, in Australia, all your colonies, your action in this atter is being and has been watched for ears. We tolerate eccentricities of aracter in our various dependencies; e adapt our constitution to the needs of ur colonies; we strive to give equality f opportunity to all and sundry. Here a chance at our door to advantage verybody, and to remove (with other cluded disabilities which still remain) e last trace of oppression for the faith.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): We have stened to-night with unusual interest to he debate which has arisen on this otion. Besides the speeches—the very structive and luminous speeches—of the on. Member for the University of xford and the hon. Member for the niversity of Dublin, we have had from y hon. friend the Member for the rfon Division of Carnarvonshire a peech of significant eloquence. We ave also had to-night in this debate a singular absence of that kind of religious bigotry which at one time used to intrude itself in discussions of this kind. In the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down we recognise a large and liberal spirit, based upon colonial experience, which will commend itself to us all. I cannot help feeling that, at any rate, a wider recognition is being given to the claims of Ireland in this matter, and that is the spirit in which we desire it to be regarded. No doubt it may appear to some hon. Members that this is partly due to the idea of killing Home Rule with kindness, but still we must not forget that the terms of the resolution embody a truism to which assent cannot be refused. We are obliged to ask ourselves what the giving of a vote in favour of this resolution would mean, and what interpretation would be put upon it. I do not find, either in the terms of the resolution or in the speeches of the hon. Members who moved and seconded that resolution, any definite explanation of the kind of scheme that would satisfy Ireland. They were very fair and moderate in their remarks, but there was nothing about them which indicated the kind of scheme that would give satisfaction to Ireland; and, therefore, by assenting and voting for this resolution I might appear to be pledging myself to what is in the minds of the Irish Members, without really knowing what it is, and without retaining that freedom of action which I always desire to retain whenever a proposal of this kind is put before the House. That is the difficulty which I feel in accepting this resolution, but having regard to its terms I could not possibly vote against it. We have had from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House at various times within the last four or five years a strong expression of his own views upon this question. They were embodied in a remarkable letter which the right hon. Gentleman wrote to one of his constituents in 1899, and we have every reason to think that that letter could not have been written without the assent of his colleagues.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It was.

MR. BRYCE: I am surprised to hear that, because when a letter of that kind

is written by a gentleman occupying the position of the Leader of the House one is naturally inclined to think that it represents the views of the Government. We have had no progress made with this question, and we do not know how far the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in converting his colleagues. I do hope, therefore, that when the right hon. Gentleman addresses the House again upon this subject he will be able to throw some light upon this matter, and that he will be able to tell the House how far his colleagues support him. He has had the courage to start the question; let him also have the persistence to impress his views on his colleagues and endeavour to bring about a settlement of what we admit should be settled. It is a very old grievance. I think it is older than any Member in the House now can recollect. It existed as far back as 1854, and in 1873 it was the subject of a remarkable Bill brought forward by the Liberal Government of that day, which was only defeated by a majority of three. I think very few Members now present were in the House at the time of that debate.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I was one of the three.

MR. BRYCE: Well I hope that all the years that have passed since then have taught the hon. Gentleman wiser and more tolerant views than he then expressed.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: Not in the least.

MR. BRYCE: It is quite true, as has been said by several hon. Gentlemen, and in particular by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, that this grievance is not quite so serious as it might appear, because it is a grievance which is largely made by the Catholic Bishops of Ireland themselves. It is they who insist that members of their flocks shall not enter Trinity College, and having made a grievance, they turn round and complain of it. I say they make it for this reason that it is not a grievance in other Roman Catholic countries. It is not a grievance even in England, because, as was pointed out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford, the old policy of preventing Catholics going to Oxford has in late years been h reversed, and Catholics have now halls of residence under two of religious orders expressly to pr religious instruction under Ca influences. [AN HON. MEMBER: ecclesiastical law.] Be that as it the Holy See encourages Catholics to Oxford by making this provision them there. But there is a still remarkable case—the case of the Co nent of Europe. I will come back again, as it is set forth in the extra interesting Return which has been sented to the House, but I refer to it only for the purpose of calling atten to the fact, that Catholics in such Catholic countries as Germany, Fr and Belgium are permitted by th ecclesiastical superiors to resort the universities of their country wh are absolutely unsectarian and nominational. It cannot be said, th fore, that this is really such a serious grievance, when the Cath of Europe are content to submit wi Still I do not deny for a moment that is a grievance, even if it is largely which the people have created for the selves. But if they believe it to be inequality, and if it is associated in th minds with injustice to their country a violation of their national feelings, must recognise it as a practical fact. Th is the sentiment which has been expres on both sides of the House to-night Therefore, looking on it as a grievance and believing it to be felt as a grievance by Irish Catholics, we ought to do our best to remove it. How then can we proceed to remove it? Let me say in passing that I entirely agree with what has been so well said by my hon. friend the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire, that we must not consider that this is a grievance affecting only the upper classes. It is not a grievance affecting only the upper classes. Everyone who knows the Irish peasantry knows that there is no peasantry more desirous of knowledge or possessed of brighter minds than they are. There are three parts of the United Kingdom which have among the humblest population a strong desire for knowledge, combined with a most susceptible intellect. That is true of the West of Scotland; it is true of Wales in an eminent degree, as has been said by my hon. friend, and I believe it is also true of Ireland. It

efore, we can do anything to make education more adequate and more y acceptable to the peasantry of Ire-, we shall have rendered a very great ice to that country—a service in ch we ought to be proud to bear a t in rendering. Premising that, I e to ask what we can do. There is plan.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): There is plan of the First Lord of the asury.

MR. BRYCE: Yes, the right hon. ntleman indicated a plan in his letter 1899. It was a plan which in many pects was a considerable advance on ns previously submitted, and it was a an which did less violence to the feel-gs of English friends than any previous an. At the same time I will not go far as to say that it was a plan that e English people would have accepted, nd it would probably require some odification. There was one point on hich it was very vague, and that as with regard to the consti-ution of the governing body. We have o certainty that that plan will be ccepted in Ireland. We were told at the ime that it probably would be accepted by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, but I have heard since that it would not. I have no private access to the opinions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. We know those opinions have been frequently changed, but it was stated, with some appearance of authority, that the hierarchy thought that plan went further than they were prepared to go, and that they could not give it their assent. Are we to understand that they have altered their views since? At any rate, at present we are without a plan, and all one is able to do is to lay down some of the general principles to which a useful and possible plan ought, if possible, to conform. That is as far as we can go, having no plan before us. What light is thrown on the possibility of a practical plan by the Return which has been presented to the House? The right hon. Gentleman in a previous debate suggested that we might get light from abroad. It was a happy thought, and he carried it out by directing that inquiries should be made by our foreign representatives. We have some very interesting statements in this Paper, but I am bound to say some of them are not at all sufficient. I think that the statements with reference to Austria and Switzerland might be much clearer, but there is a great deal of interesting and curious matter in the Paper dealing with other subjects as well as this subject. What does it broadly show? It throws no practical light in the direction of the constitution of a university which would meet the wishes of the Irish Nationalist Members, and be at the same time undenominational. That is the very point it omits, and the light it gives us is negative light. It shows us that not anywhere in Europe is there a university which conforms to the demands made on behalf of the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland. We may put out of sight countries entirely Catholic like Spain, because we cannot expect much light from them. I am afraid my reason is not the one put forward by the hon. Member. These countries being entirely Catholic, the conditions are not the same as those we have to consider. The same applies to exclusively Protestant countries like Sweden. Sweden being almost entirely Protestant does not care to make special provision for its Roman Catholic subjects. We, have, however, a very instructive illustration with the countries side by side in which the minority in one is the majority in the other. I refer to Holland and Belgium. In Belgium there is a large and powerful Catholic majority, and an important Protestant minority; in Holland there is a Protestant majority and a large and influential Catholic minority. These are the two very countries in which it might be expected that some special provision would have been made for the university education of the minority, and that a desire such as that now before us would have been satisfied. But there is no special provision in either of these countries. In Holland there is a large and influential Catholic minority in Brabant and other provinces, which often affects the trend of Dutch politics, and which is very keen with regard to university education; and yet the universities of Holland, according to the Paper, are absolutely unsectarian, and no provision at all is made for the special case of Catholics. Belgium is a country where religious feeling runs very high, and it has three unsectarian universities and one Catholic

University, the University of Louvain. That is an ancient university, venerable by its traditions, with the power of granting degrees, but it does not receive any State subvention, even in a country as Catholic as Belgium. But there is another curious fact connected with it. The Catholic University at Louvain has 1,600 students, whereas the other universities — unsectarian universities — have 3,200 students. In face of the fact that Belgium is a predominantly Catholic country, twice as many students go to the unsectarian universities as to the Catholic University. That shows, therefore, that even while the amplest provision is made by the University of Louvain, with all its ancient traditions, the bulk of the Catholic students prefer to go to the undenominational universities. That appears to me to be a very material fact. Take France and Germany. In France no university makes special provision for Catholic students, and in Germany provision is made by having Catholic faculties of theology side by side with Protestant faculties. That exists in the famous Universities of Bonn and Tübingen, and there are one or two other universities also where Catholic and Protestant faculties of theology exist side by side. There can be no objection to that in Ireland. I suppose no one would object to faculties of Catholic theology in Trinity College. That is a small matter, however, over which I do not think anyone would quarrel. In the United States there is no case in point at all, because there any rich body of persons who can bring together a certain sum of money can incorporate themselves and call themselves a university, and proceed to grant degrees. In fact, in the United States Catholics are better off than any other community, because they can create a university by what is admitted to be an absolutely authoritative and efficient method of making a university, namely, by Papal Bull. The Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen were created in that way, and no one has ever disputed that the Pope has a right to create a university, and these American universities for Catholics have availed themselves of the Papal power. I may put it this way, therefore—that so far as foreign experience goes, and so far as we can expect light from foreign countries, that light does not go to support in any way the special claim made on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland. Nevertheless, I desire as far as we possibly can to meet the Irish demand; but all I can venture to contribute to the discussion of the subject is to suggest certain conditions on which that demand may be granted. I need hardly say that I am speaking for myself only, but I have no reason to doubt that a certain number of hon. Members hold similar views. In the first place, any scheme put forward practically must be such as will receive the acceptance of the Irish Catholic bishops. It must be one to which they will give their assent. There is no use in putting forward a plan which would be received merely as an instalment and be the basis for further agitation. We remember what happened in 1873 when Mr. Gladstone brought forward a plan which we had every reason to believe would give satisfaction, but which ultimately was rejected by the Irish bishops. That ought not to occur again. When a plan is brought forward, we ought to have the assurance, which no doubt the bishops will give, that it will be accepted. In the second place it ought to be a scheme which cannot be drawn into a precedent dangerous to university education in England and Scotland. There have been some signs of late of a revival of denominationalism in this country, and many of us feel the strongest possible objection to any form of denominationalism in every branch of education, from the elementary school to the university, and although we are obliged to submit to the denominationalism which prevails in the elementary schools, we are determined to resist any attempt to sectarianise university education. We take our stand upon the fact that as far back as 1845 we adopted the principle of undenominational education in Ireland, and that system was adopted in England in 1871 by the University Tests Act, which threw open Oxford and Cambridge. It would be a very serious set back if we did anything to check that principle, and I therefore think that we must lay down the condition that nothing must be done in Ireland which would be likely to be used as a precedent for going wrong in this matter in England. But I am very far from saying that a scheme cannot be devised which would meet the conditions. I think we ought to have a scheme which will meet the Irish demand and not

ish a bad precedent for England. I come to what seems to me the most ortant condition, and that is that any for a new university system in and should give us the prospect of ieving the ultimate object in view, nely, to give Irish Catholics a cheaper, ter and more efficient university educa- than they at present receive. To up a weak university, or a university under clerical control as not to be per- led with the true university spirit, uld not be giving the Irish people at we ought to give them. There- e the first of our conditions is at the university shall be a true iversity in the highest and best sense the term. That is a point which is in me danger of being overlooked, because ose who have followed the history of ish education know that, as a rule, the anges made in it have not been ade from educational motives. They ve been made as bargains between e bishops on the one hand and the binet on the other, the result being to cure the silence of the bishops and the ace of the Cabinet. That is the reason hy the intermediate education scheme s not borne the fruit which the money ght to have borne; that is the reason hy the creation of the Royal University as not the result it ought to have. As ne of those who have always opposed e extinction of the Queen's Colleges, have always felt that the ideas arted by the right hon. Gentleman e Member for Thanet, when he was e Irish Secretary, and which were con- nued by Mr. Forster, were political, not lucational ideas, and if they had been imated by a genuine educational policy, ey might have achieved far more than ey did. Supposing then that we agree -and I hope the right hon. Gentleman ill agree - that it is education that ought be in our minds, what are the educa- onal conditions we ought to lay down in rder to make Irish university education roper? The university must not be nder clerical control. It is not sufficient say that there shall not be a clerical ajority on its governing body; we may ave a body virtually clerical, although ishops and priests do not constitute its ajority. In the second place, it ought have first-rate teaching—teaching on e same level as that of Trinity ollege. Everyone admits the merits of rinity College, and I do not think that any university would be a proper gift from us to the Irish Catholics if it were not as good in point of teaching as Trinity College.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It ought to be much better.

MR. BRYCE: By all means. My idea of an Irish Catholic University is, that it should be one possessing professors of such eminence and learning that Protestant students would gladly attend it, because I should be very sorry to see a university entirely resorted to by Catholic students. I would desire to see Protestant and Catholic students sitting side by side, and I would wish to see Protestant professors amongst the Catholic professors, just as I desire to see Catholic professors in Trinity College. I would add this further consideration that ought to influence us, namely that the supply of first-rate teachers is not unlimited, and that it is not very easy to stock two or three colleges in a country like Ireland with teachers of the first rank. That suggests the remark, that if we could so liberalise Trinity College as to give it no longer the Protestant atmosphere which is complained of, we would make it more useful to the Catholics than if we set up another university which might not be able to attract the best teachers. Then, a proper university ought to have a high examination standard; it ought to have a governing body which would be fully alive to the importance of making its degrees hold their own against the degrees of English and Scotch universities, as well as Trinity College. For the university to begin with a low standard would be suicidal. That of course implies that the governing body which would choose the examiners, and direct the courses of instruction, should be an enlightened governing body, fully alive to the educational necessities of the world. The last point is, I think, that the university ought to be pervaded by a genuine intellectual atmosphere. It ought to have an atmosphere where there is a geniune feeling for learning science and free inquiry. If it has not that genuine feeling it is not a university. The life-blood of a university is the feeling that it exists for the promotion of truth, that its professors are not limited in the course of their researches, or are not prevented from teaching what they believe to be the truth. It

is also essential to the true spirit of a university that there shall be such an admixture of students of different religions and different classes in society as will produce that working of one mind on another which is one of the best parts of university life. I need not dwell on that, as it was admirably emphasised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. Everyone who remembers his university life will remember that he learned at least as much from those among whom he lived as from his teachers, and that he learned from them because they came under conditions different from his own, and probably belonged to a different religion. I believe that Roman Catholics are not at all as likely to become Protestants by contact with Protestants, as Protestants are to become Roman Catholics by contact with Roman Catholics. I never heard that a single Roman Catholic had become a Protestant at my university, but I have known a great many Protestants who have become Roman Catholics. An intellectual atmosphere is quite as essential to a university as that Catholic atmosphere which hon. Gentlemen ask for. If they try for a Catholic atmosphere at the sacrifice of an intellectual atmosphere, they will find that they have got what is of no value. I feel further, that if there is any country in which it is desirable that the different religious bodies should be brought together during the years of university life, that country is Ireland. Many of the most eminent Nationalist leaders, from Wolfe Tone down, have been Protestants, and have had the most power in stirring the feelings of the people. If I were a Nationalist I should not wish to see Nationalist Catholics in one university and all others in another. I should be glad to have them mixed as much as possible, and to have them learning to cherish the interests of their common country, while pursuing those studies which would foster and stimulate their intellects. I believe it would be a very bad thing for Irish Nationalists if the Irish Catholic population were to be educated apart from the Protestant population, but I do not see any reason why we should not devise a plan under which the joint education of Catholics and Protestants would not be possible. That brings me to the conclusion which I can offer to the House. I desire very earnestly to see some scheme proposed which would [illegible] this grievance, and I believe a scheme possible on the conditions which I have tried to indicate. I am sure that many of us on this side of the House approach this question with open mind. I do not believe that there is any one of us who does not wish to give the Irish Roman Catholics the best education they can, but it is for them to make practical proposals. I can assure the Irish Members that if they will make a practical proposal which appears to us to have the elements of real educational efficiency, it we will give it our hearty support without attempting to make any political capital out of it. This question has lasted far too long before us to be any longer the sport of Parliament. We must endeavour to do the best for Ireland, and no greater service can be rendered to it than to increase the educational facilities of her people, and to stimulate, if possible, in them that love of knowledge and learning which in days far remote shone forth in brilliant flame, and which I am persuaded still glows in their hearts as much as ever.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): In the few remarks I wish to make on this occasion I hope I shall follow the line which up to this time has been taken, and not impart any acrimony into the peaceful tone which has characterised this discussion. I think the House may congratulate all the speakers on the fact that they have endeavoured to put forward their views temperately and discreetly. I was much struck by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and I think the advice he gave was good, and such a scheme as was sketched out would, I think, be acceptable now to a great number of the Irish people; but I doubt whether it would be to the Roman Church, and that gives no help on this occasion. Every Government is in a helpless position with regard to this matter. The Government are willing to propose and do propose certain measures, but they have had no support in carrying them out. The whole House is anxious for the matter to be settled once and for all; we are all anxious to thrash the matter out, and are agreed that the examining staff of a university should be of the most thorough description, and that the general atmosphere should be as highly intellectual as it is possible to

frankly admit that my experience is it you get greater liberality of w under one university seat of rning than under clerical guidance, l I am most anxious lest we into a narrow groove. It is true that have given the Irish a large measure denominational education, and also eded to their wish for intermediate ication, but when it comes to university ication it is another matter; then the boy omes a man and wants to rub shoulders h his colleagues, and what he becomes n he will remain in after life. It has n admitted that there are sufficient versities in Ireland to educate all the h in Ireland, and if you found a versity for the education of Roman holics alone you will do more harm n good, because you will reduce educa- to the narrowest possible limits, and s because I believe this that I depre- e the extension of Roman Catholic versities in Ireland. Although I live r the north of Ireland I have many portunities of hearing the opinions of tlemen who live in the south, and I there are many in the south of Ireland o are not satisfied and who deprecate s agitation. We want to satisfy this timent, for every sentiment is danger- ; if it is allowed to grow it becomes langerous weapon in the hands of a gerous part of the community. I am of those who are most anxious to see question settled, and I would go to at lengths to try and get it settled, l if I had thought that the hierarchy reland was satisfied with the proposition t was made I should have voted for resolution; but when I am told it has er been taken notice of in an official I am again thrown back into despair knowing what to do in the matter s is one of the most important matters Ireland. We in Scotland have tated and got great universities which going extremely well, and if the sam tem was adopted in Ireland it would a far more brilliant success, and if it ld solve this difference I would be y too glad to vote money to universi- in Ireland, and would gladly do so to e Ireland what Scotland already pos- ses. I should now just like to make or two remarks on a Paper put into hands last night which contained the lies to an inquiry sent out with regard this matter. I find from the Paper t while in certain cases in Roman Catholic colleges special provision is made for Protestants, the universities themselves are absolutely free and open to Protestant and Roman Catholics alike, and there is a consensus of opinion among all religious critics that universities should be free from State interference. Those universities are quite willing to receive Protestants, whilst Protestant universities are equally willing to receive Roman Catholics. Your sons do not become Protestants because they are placed beside Protestants in the universities. With regard to the university quoted by the hon. Baronet who seconded the motion, that is largely supported by the State, and in that case there is provision made for Roman Catholics; but it does not work well, because there is constant friction between the Minister of Education and the Government. The figures recently issued show that the Roman Catholic sectarian system is fallacious, and that it has been found necessary on the Continent to encourage unsectarian universities. If that has been found a good thing so far as Europe, as well as England and Scotland, are concerned, why should it not be equally good for Ireland? Let not the Irish people be so rigorous or exacting in their demands, and then this House will do all it can to help them.

*MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I wish not to enter into the regions of controversy on this question, but rather to express the views I entertain with regard to a question which I consider requires great consideration, and the difficulties of which I also know. Many of our seats of learning are insufficiently provided for. Take Queen's College, Belfast, which is doing a magnificent educational work. That college is simply starved, especially the laboratories and the scientific departments. I can see that this will continue, for no statesman dare venture to give further encouragement to institutions which can be used only by the Protestant minority, while the claims of the great majority of the people of Ireland are refused. I think this is one reason why this question should be very soon settled indeed. On the merits it is admitted that the Catholics of Ireland have a grievance. They require that secular knowledge shall be founded on religious faith, that literature, science and philosophy shall be taught so as to

harmonise with the doctrines of the Church, and free from the danger of undermining the Christian religion. Queen's College, in Belfast, and others are not established on these lines. I do not call them godless colleges, but certainly they are not established on these lines. Therefore they are rejected by the hierarchy of the Church, and who would dare to interfere with, or object to, these conscientious views? That the Catholics have a grievance is admitted, not only by the leading statesmen of this country, but by the thinkers in the English Church and the best educated Protestant laity of Ireland, including the professors and Presidents of the Magee College, Londonderry, the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway, and Trinity College, Dublin. Many suppose that the demand which is made is for a Catholic university. Correctly speaking, it is not a Catholic University that is wanted, but a university in which Catholics will receive education in harmony with their conscientious views, open to all denominations, similar to the Melbourne College, to which many of the Protestants there send their children to finish their education. I can see no just reason for refusing the Catholic claim in the interest of education. It seems that the first duty of the State is to educate the people, and that in whatever way the people desire themselves. If three-quarters of the people were Jews in place of Roman Catholics, and if they demanded a Hebrew college to be set up in Ireland, I should willingly grant it. The business of the State is not to dictate or prescribe a religion, but to supply the means of instruction so that the people shall be educated. The money required is very small indeed compared with the outlay of the nation. You spend vast sums of money on the building of ships, on the Army and Navy you pour it out like water, but you grudge the small sum wanted for the education of three-fourths of the inhabitants of Ireland, who, till about fifty years ago, were totally neglected by the State, and even now are handicapped in the race of life when brought into competition with the Protestant youth of the country as candidates for the Civil Service and positions of emolument and trust, simply because they have been denied the same means of education as the Protestants have enjoyed for over a century. There is room for another university in Ireland. Th four universities in Scotland, whic much smaller country. There are versities in England, from Durham in north to Oxford and Cambridge in south. Ireland has but one teaching versity, and that practically for about 650,000 Protestant inhabitants country which supplies soldiers sailors of the highest order to the Br Empire, and pays its taxes to the n should be provided with the of education in a liberal spirit know it has been said that system in Ireland is united secular separate religious education. Th no such thing in Ireland as se secular education as a principle. P tants who hold the theory of education do not act upon it. They not send a child to an elementary where there was a Catholic teac they possibly could avoid it. Ever testant church that is erected has a close by, with a master who mus the same religious views as the man of the church, who is the pa the school. United education in is a delusion. It may be put for prevent the Roman Catholic peop receiving adequate consideratio united education is not even among Protestants themselves. sects will not unite. The Presb will not send his children to a Ch Ireland school, or *vice versa*. people of Ireland will not have education, by all means let the secular education. The opposition part of a fraction of the people north of Ireland on the score of education is a fraud. May I say have no doubt but the clamour against ritualism in England by t conformists of this House has pr many, and has had some effect in ing the progress and settlement question. It should not, for it is a different question. The Minister w with the university problem in Irel brings it to a speedy settlement considered one of the most popula men of his generation, for it is a question and ripe for settlement. clusion, will you allow me to say think I can perceive a tendency part of the Government to treat in a more considerate manner formerly it did, and as an evidence I quote the passing of the Local

Mr. Samuel Young.

at Bill for Ireland, the Agricultural Technical Education Bill, with a at of £165,000 a year, and, may I add, visit of Her Gracious Majesty to and. In regard to these sentimental ters I think there is some importance be attached to them. In promoting sibly the display of the national blems, I hope the Government will ther gratify the people of Ireland, and et the reasonable expectations by nouncing that next session a Bill shall introduced to settle the vexed question university education in Ireland.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, .): We have had a debate which has en illuminating beyond the majority of e debates in this House, and while I nnot hope to rise to the high level of eakers who have preceded me, I trust at I shall say nothing that will mar the armony of the discussion. It is permissible and almost essential that someing should be said from the point of iew I hold. I represent a large body of pinion in Ireland, which hitherto has ound no spokesman in this House this vening. It is in their interest that I ish to present a view of the case that as not yet received consideration at all. do not desire to cast doubt on the incerity of hon. Members on the other ide of the House, or upon others who iffer from the view I take. This is not question that is being debated for the rst time in the House of Commons. his is a question that has divided not nly the Irish people, but every civilised eople for many generations and for any centuries, and although there may e a definite right and wrong, I do not now that any of us can say with bsolute certainty that he possesses the ight or the wrong. I think there is s much sincerity and as much ground or that sincerity on the one side as the ther. It has been represented that the hole of Ireland has acquiesced in the roposals made to-day. I venture to nter a *caveat* against that statement, nd I say that a large portion of he population of Ireland is opposed to he general proposals which are made o-night. I use the words "general roposals," for the proposals which ave been made are very general ndeed, and I should like to apply to hem a test which I think is of some alue. I would like to put to hon. Members on both sides of the House the test of an examination. I should like to ask them to write a paper embodying their views as to what they think we are voting upon to-night. I venture to say that there are not two who would put down anything like approximately the same. I do not think it is an extravagant demand that before we are asked to deal with an immense principle of this kind, we should be told by somebody, whether by Members opposite, or by the Leader of the House, what it is we are committing ourselves to. I heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen this evening, and it was a very interesting speech no doubt, but for the life of me I could not form the faintest idea of what this ideal state was he was striving for. He pictured what might be a sort of college of angels where everyone agreed to do everything they had hitherto differed about. We are not going to have exactly that solution of this vexed question in Ireland. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth feels strongly on the matter. He has not told us—and he is entitled to speak for a large body of Irish opinion—whether the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House is one that would be accepted as a final and just solution of the problem as it presents itself to the mass of those who agree with him now. My hon. friend the Member for the Stowmarket Division of Suffolk said many things which were very nice, and which we all agree about. He said if we were virtuous we would be happy, but he did not tell us what we are really asked to do. I don't suppose I can get an answer from the First Lord of the Treasury. He is not present, but perhaps someone will tell us later on what we are asked to do. I want to know where we stand. Are we asked to endow from the funds of the State a Roman Catholic University which shall be in any sense exclusively Roman Catholic, and, if so, in what sense it is to be exclusively Roman Catholic? Is it to be controlled partly or entirely by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and if we are told that it is to be so controlled what pledge or assurance have we that the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church are to be waived? It is the secular claim of the Roman Catholic Church that in the matter of education the Church should be and must be supreme. The Bishops have in no particular instance waived the claim, and I do not believe

that that claim is yet eliminated from the essential doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. I do not agree with the proposal to endow any university of this kind, and I think it is reasonable and fair that we should be told what we are asked to do. I wish to see this put in some arithmetical expression which I can appreciate. I come to another point, which I think I have a right to ask shall be met. We have been told, we have been taunted I may say—those of us who take the view I take—with doing something in this matter which is retrograde. We have been told that we are withholding a just demand from an important section of the people of Ireland, and because we do so we are stamped as ignorant, retrograde, and illiberal. But after all there is something to be said for the verdict given by what I may call the collective experience of a very large section of mankind. I do not think enough has been made during this discussion of the information put into our hands on this question of endowing Roman Catholic education. There is no foundation whatever for the allegation that what is demanded as a matter of right and justice to Ireland has been conceded in any other country in the civilised world, and in confirmation of my view we are presented with this very valuable Return. From beginning to end of this return we have but one story told. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen says that a negative light is thrown by this Return on the proposition we are considering. I venture to contest that position. I venture to say that the light thrown upon it is a very brilliant and positive light. We are challenged on this matter, and we are told that we are retrograde and illiberal because we do not do this thing. Go to Roman Catholic and Protestant countries and you will find one uniform conclusion. You will not find one single country in which this proposition is admitted that what we are doing now is an injustice. In Bavaria the universities are open to students of all creeds, and the Church exercises no control whatever. I come to Belgium—

"The University of Louvain was founded by the Roman Catholic Episcopate of Belgium as a university where the arts and sciences should be taught by professors who hold the orthodox faith, and think rightly of the Roman Catholic religion. Article XIII. of the general regulations expressly declared that all students must profess the Catholic religion and pe[illegible] duties, while Article XIV. require [illegible] attend courses of religious lectures. [illegible] versity is not endowed by the State [illegible] hold no property. The revenues an[illegible] controlled by the Belgian bishops, [illegible] accounts are published either of in[illegible] expenditure."

Is that the parallel which hon. M[illegible] wish to reproduce in Ireland? C[illegible] we do not.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Where a[illegible] accounts of Trinity College?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I h[illegible] the faintest idea.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Nor anyon[illegible]

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Do[illegible] hon. Member really contend that i[illegible] has a grievance about the accou[illegible] Dublin University, that alters the va[illegible] of my argument? Look at France, [illegible] there is an enormous Roman Ca[illegible] population, and which enjoys, or is [illegible] posed to enjoy, the advantages of [illegible] "Concordat." All the universitie[illegible] entirely unsectarian, and Roman Ca[illegible] students are free to improve their relig[illegible] knowledge in any manner they p[illegible] like the other sects. In Athens [illegible] most ancient seat of university te[illegible] ing, the university opens its doors to [illegible] students without distinction of cre[illegible] Coming to Italy, a country which is m[illegible] tioned in this return as one in which [illegible] Roman Catholic religion is the St[illegible] religion, and where there is a Ro[illegible] Catholic population of 30,000,000, do [illegible] find any parallel to what we are asked [illegible] create? The universities are State insti[illegible] tions under the direction of the Minister [illegible] Public Education. Theology does not form one of the subjects taught in the univer[illegible] sities. In Holland, the universities [illegible] Leyden, Utrecht, Groningen, and Amster[illegible] dam are open to students of all creeds and persuasions. No objection is made by the Roman Catholic clergy to persons of their faith attending these universities. I[illegible] Portugal the Episcopate does claim rights over the education of the country, but the State votes nothing towards it, save for scientific establishments. In Prussia no special arrangements exist for the university education of Roman Catholics, as such, except in regard to the study of Roman Catholic theology. I learn to-night from my right hon friend the Member for the University of Dublin

there is a disposition at Trinity ge to give theological teaching to nember of the Roman Catholic com- ty. I would make this further ex- from the evidence given in regard ussia—

ne Prussian universities are institutions ned and maintained by the State. neous co-operation and interference, as was formerly exercised by the Papacy, nger exists. The right of conferring es issues directly from the State authori- which also determine the constitution tatus of each university. The connection ie universities with the church was ally so close, that in the Middle Ages, even in the sixteenth and seventeenth ries, they could with justice have been bed as ecclesiastical institutions. Since ighteenth century this connection has ally become less intimate, and in the at day the universities have entirely laid their ecclesiastical character."

we come to Spain—a Roman olic country if ever there was one—

here exists in Spain no special provision ie education of Roman Catholics, or of eligious denomination. The Government rsities are not in any way connected with Episcopate, no inquiry is made with l to the religion professed by those ing them, nor even respecting that of the sors themselves. Those intended for the hood are educated at seminaries."

nd, we are told, is a Roman Catholic try. Is that the programme we are l to sanction in Ireland? If so, that ws a great deal of light on the lem we are asked to solve. I cannot ie the Spanish Government of gross rality because they adopt this course ding their university institutions. I d like to say a word about Switzer-

We have had an eloquent and esting speech from the hon. ber for the Arfon Division. Switzer- is a country not altogether different Wales. It has a long history, and ow prosperous and free. There ive universities in Switzerland, four which, Bale, Zurich, Geneva, and anne, are constituted on a basis ly incompatible with the request to us to-night. There remains the ersity of Freiburg, a modern institu- founded by two very able and dis- ished Roman Catholics, who are ents in and members for the Canton eiburg. What is the history of that ersity? In the first place, it has received the sanction of the Federal the statutes of the university have been confirmed; its financial con- n is most unsound; and its degrees are not recognised by the German universities, and have very scant recognition in Switzerland itself. If we are to take Freiburg as an example, I ask hon. Members to look at what it means. In Freiburg there was an attempt made to create that ideal university which has been sketched out by my right hon. friend the Member for South Aberdeen, and which I suppose is conceived by some other hon. Members who support this proposal. There was an attempt made to introduce there the best secular teaching under ecclesiastical government. A number of professors of reputation were brought in from Germany, and some from America. After a year or two had passed some Dominican monks came from France. They acquired the direction of this university, made the situation of the German professors so intolerable that eleven or twelve left the university, and ever since that time there has been a most embittered correspondence, conducted in both languages, between the resigning professors and the Dominican friars or monks by whom they have been practically expelled from the University of Freiburg. If we are to go to Switzerland for an example of the institution we wish to see established in Ireland, it is not to the University of Freiburg we should go, but to the four universities of European reputation which exist in that Republic, which have provided some of the most learned students of Europe, and which are on a basis inconsistent with that which we are asked to yield to-night. There is only one other reference I wish to make to this report, and I make it because it is a very important one, and one we cannot possibly omit. I have been talking about Continental countries. It may fairly be said that we are an enlightened people and are not bound in any way by the precedents of European countries; that we, both in England and Ireland, are in advance of those countries, and that by combining our moral and intellectual superiority we can lay down a sound precedent which can be relied on and be in no way affected by the errors of the Continent. I do not know that I quite accept that view. I think it is a relevant fact that the experience of many many years has produced an absolutely unanimous conviction throughout the whole of the Continent. But I go now to a great kindred country, and one which has, I think, some grounds to

claim the allegiance and sympathy of hon. Members opposite as well as the respect of hon. Members on this side of the House: I go to the United States. What do we find there?

"In the United States the demand for higher, or university education, among the members of the Church of Rome has been met by the foundation at various times of numerous universities and colleges in all parts of the Republic. These institutions, the great majority of which are conducted by religious orders and congregations of the regular clergy, have been incorporated under the laws of the States and federal district or territories in which they were respectively established, so as to secure the recognition of the degrees conferred by them upon their students. Some of them have also had university privileges granted to them by the Holy See."

This next sentence is important—

"But Roman Catholic institutions, like those of other denominations, are debarred from public endowment either from Federal or State Governments, or from the municipal authorities of the towns in which they are situated."

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.) was understood to say that there was already a university in Ireland receiving State money.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: My hon. friend is quite right. It has been mentioned already this evening that by a side wind there is an institution in Dublin at St. Stephen's Green which at present, under the name of the Catholic University, is receiving something between £7,000 and £8,000 a year from the State. But that is not my point.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I was not referring to the Catholic University, but to the Royal University and the Queen's Colleges.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: And I referred to the Roman Catholic University, and I utterly fail to see what relevance that remark has to my statement that if we are to look abroad for guidance either to the Continent or to the United States we get no encouragement or sanction for the proposal of which I understand my hon. friend is in favour. With regard to what we can learn from outside I have only one word more to say. My hon. friend the Member for the Stowbridge Division spoke of the lesson we may learn from our colonies. There are many Members here who are better acquainted with the affairs of our colonies than I am, I venture to say that, with the exa of the university to which he re the Laval University in Quebec, is absolutely no institution th out the British Empire, outside islands, which would come within definition he seems to suggest. I wrong, but I do not know of any governing colony which has delibe established a State-endowed Ro Catholic University. If such exis shall be interested to learn where i [AN HON. MEMBER: Laval.] W regard to the Laval University, will only say this: it is not modern one. [AN HON. MEM It was founded in 1852.] Yes, it founded in 1852, but it is recited in charter by which that university established that it was founded in tinuation of an institution which existed in Canada for over 200 The Laval University is a vival of a time which has long by, and I do not share the roseate of the hon. Member for Suffolk regard to the influence and value o university. I have before me a written by a very competent adv which occur these observations—

'Until very recently no seri tempt was made to provide ele education in the province of Quebec. regard the province is still in a mo ward condition. There are many par province in which the great bulk inhabitants cannot read or write, a school commissioners and members of pal councils are frequently found u read or write. The general result educational development in this pro most unsatisfactory, very far behind found in all the other provinces in Ca

And this is the result of the exist that centre of national intellige which the First Lord speaks and he desires to reproduce in Therefore, if we are to rely on thi instance of the survival of Newfou University we ought to have mor mony than we have had hithert its value and as to the intention Members to create anything re resembling that institution either stitution or in the work which it d do not think I have said anything can fairly be said to detract fro moderate tone in which this deb been conducted, but I think I am to point out that by the passages read, the onus of proof has certain

ed to those hon. Members who desire o back upon this uniform movement. e are to take our ideal from the uni- al practice of other countries in the ld, we are justified in the course we taking, and we should not be justified following the advice given by hon. mbers opposite from Ireland. I repre- t those who feel that the course which been taken by this country is not y just in itself, but is absolutely ential in the interests of all freedom l popular liberty. That, I know, will disputed from the other side. Hon. mbers opposite would take another w. They would say that human piness, and possibly human liberty, uld be promoted by going back in this tter, but I think it is fair, bearing in nd the whole history of this question, t I should be allowed to speak, and not h bated breath, of the view which I st distinctly hold that it is by the con- uance of the very system which it is w desired to reproduce, that this country l other countries have been held back m the freedom we now enjoy. I do recognise the value of the argument, hough I do recognise as a contribution the debate the tendency to introduce question of elementary education. I not see that there is any fair parallel be drawn between elementary and iversity education. The object of mentary education is to teach very ng children the elements of knowledge, l if at that time we think it is ur duty—and most of us do—to instil o their minds, in the only way we can, principles of religion, it is not unrea able to take that opportunity. But en you come to the university you are dealing with the same material. A iversity is a place in which universal owledge is or may be imparted, and en I carry my mind back to the ech of the right hon. Gentleman the ader of the House, I recall a vision of niversity which would in no way re- sent that universality of knowledge ich to my mind is connected with the y idea of a university. I fail to under- nd on what great principle we are ted to establish a university in ich three of the faculties are to be d in abeyance. ["No."] There again I not only ready but anxious to be cor- ted if I am wrong. I should like my n. friends to tell me whether I am not ht in saying that the suggestion of the ht hon. Gentleman was——

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): What he said was that they should not be State-endowed.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Exactly, and what that means is that the State will endow that university, but will take no responsibility for three of the most important faculties. I attach great importance to that. You may go all through Europe, and you will find a consensus of opinion as to the limits within which these subjects should be taught. If the State does not make itself responsible for these faculties you will have a limitation of the teaching of those subjects, which may, *ipso facto*, put that university on a different plane — I will not say a lower plane, as I do not wish to be offensive — from that of other universities, where full research and full play for human knowledge is permitted. I have already spoken too long, and I will conclude by saying that there is not one man in this House who has the faintest idea of what it is we are asked to do. I have some knowledge of what can be the meaning of a Roman Catholic University; I have studied this question enough to know what liberality in this matter can mean. I am under a very clear responsibility, not only to my own conscience, but to my constituents, who must be considered if this matter is to be brought to any satisfactory conclusion. On their behalf, and on behalf of a number of Members of this House, I say that we want to know what it is to which we are being committed—whether we are to follow the hon. Member for East Mayo or the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, or my hon. friend the Member for the Stowbridge Division, or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University, the statements of all of whom are, as far as I can make out, utterly irreconcilable, not in their generalities, but in the practical application of their generalities. Under which leader are we to be induced to make this concession? [AN HON. MEMBER: They are all leaders.] Yes, they are all leaders, and they all lead in different directions. If I can get any illumination in this matter I may, perhaps, be disposed to change my mind, but I do not think it is at all likely.

MR. DILLON: I think this is one of the most interesting debates which have taken place in the House of Commons. As an Irish Member I feel bound to offer my warmest and most grateful thanks to the hon. Member for Oxford University, the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire, and the hon. Member for the Stowmarket Division for the generous and sympathetic speeches which they have contributed to this debate. I confess that if this debate had produced nothing except the remarkable and, to us Irishmen, most grateful speech of the hon. Member for Oxford University, the debate would have amply justified itself. That an hon. Member holding his high position in the learned world, and representing the greatest seat of learning of its time, should become a convert to our demand and advocate our claim in such powerful and eloquent language, undoubtedly marks a considerable advance in our cause. I will now turn to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, because it raised certain important and vital matters connected with this whole question. At the outset he expressed his regret that the mover and the seconder of the motion had not given to the House some indication of the plan contemplated by the Irish people for the settlement of this question. He proceeded to say that at present there was no plan before the House. With regard to his criticism that we have submitted no plan, I do not think it is a fair or just one. It has been recognised, and over and over again stated by men high in authority in this House, and versed in its practice and traditions, that it is not the wisest or most prudent way to advance any great question, for those interested in it to introduce a Bill or a plan which can only be brought forward as a private Member's measure; but that, on the contrary, the proper and best course is to endeavour to obtain from the House a recognition of the existence of a grievance, before addressing one's self to the particulars of a Bill. I ventured, however, to point out, and the right hon. Gentleman recognised the truth of the remark, that we were not without a plan, because we have before us the plan which has come to be known as the plan of the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman commented upon that proposal, and said we were entitled to suppose that when that letter was written it was the plan of the Governmen must say, on behalf of the right h Gentleman who leads this House, th has always been perfectly frank honest in this matter, and that he the most elaborate precautions to guard himself and to point out to country and to the House that this posal came from himself alone, and it was in no sense a Government prop But, said the right hon. Gentleman Member for South Aberdeen, what sec or indication have we that this pro would be accepted in its entirety, or with some slight modifications, by bishops and the lay Catholics of Ire He then went on to make a very rem able statement, which I confess took surprise. He said that, so far from h any reason or ground to imagine tha proposal would be accepted, he u stood that the bishops of Ireland changed their mind and had decid refuse it. I think it is of the r importance that this matter be put on a true basis. What hap with regard to the plan of right hon. Gentleman the Lead the House? It was made, as ev will remember, in a letter addres the right hon. Gentleman to one constituents in the mouth of Janu year, and subsequently in a spe livered in East Manchester. Thi and this speech naturally created amount of interest and some ment amongst the Catholics of I Immediately after the delivery speech a great and representative ence of Irish Catholics was held Mansion House at Dublin. Pre that meeting was the secretary Irish bishops, and the plan of th Lord of the Treasury was discussed one word, critical or hostile, was s all the speeches were of a ch friendly to the plan, and suggestin the proposal should be considere most friendly spirit by the Cath Ireland. We were given to unde and I believe there is no doubt ab fact, that the bishops had arran hold a meeting to consider that pla what happened in the interval? after the conference at the M House, in February last year, I l a semi-official notice appeared *Standard* newspaper, a statement ac by the bishops and the Catho Ireland as semi-official, announcin

plan was in no sense a Government , and that the Government had no ition whatever of dealing with the tion. That, of itself, might have passed over, although it certainly ted a feeling of profound disappoint- t on the part of Irishmen, but it was wed by the speech of the Duke of onshire, which must be fresh in memory of every Member of this se. I would ask the House to listen e I read a short extract from that ch. Speaking on the 16th March of year to the Liberal Unionist Associa- , the Duke of Devonshire used these ds--

I should be extremely surprised if, during existence of the present Government——"

ark those words. He did not even say luring the existence of the present rliament," but "during the existence the present Government."

". . . any practical measure dealing with is subject is brought forward. I acknow- lge, gentlemen,—perhaps I ought to be hamed of so acknowledging—that this is a bject to which I have not recently given y close study. I admit that the arguments t forward by Mr. Balfour are extremely fficult to answer, but the experience I tained on this question, which now, I am ry to say, goes back as far as 1873, when I as a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government, hich proposed to deal with the question of niversity education, has led me very much doubt whether, as a measure of practical olitics, it is possible for either a Liberal or a onservative Government to make any pro- sals on this subject, which should not be mited by conditions and restrictions which ill fail to make it a satisfactory solution of e problem of Roman Catholic education. I ve never looked upon the question as one of mediate practical importance."

face of that statement, what conclusion uld the bishops and the laity come to? think it is unfair to charge them with e intention attributed to them of reject- g the proposals of the First Lord, when, a matter of fact, they were never lowed to consider them when this *non ssumus* was introduced. Let me point t what is the record of the bishops on is question. You will find it in their eclaration of 28th June, 1897, when they y—

"In the course of his speech Mr. Balfour served that upon this complex problem the overnment had not as much guidance from aders of Irish public opinion as they would ke to have. Perhaps he may have some ason for the complaint, but for our part we ust say that we have always been ready to lace any information which we possessed at the disposal of the Government, but that we have never received an intimation that anyone in authority had any desire to receive it from us. Even now we should be glad if anyone were to formulate a series of questions."

And then they proceeded with the famous declaration which has been alluded to. There is another point. I desire to say in the frankest way this. It has always been the custom here to assume that this question is one between the bishops and the Government. Permit me to say that it is nothing of the sort. I tell the Government deliberately that if they produce a plan which commends itself to the judgment and consciences of the great body of the Catholic laity in Ireland, I do not believe that the bishops, even if they desired, would dare to refuse it. The laity are primarily interested, and, although we desire to act with the clergy, it is absolutely untrue, and I indignantly deny, that the Irish Catholics are dictated to by the bishops. Even if the bishops were so unwise and so bigoted as to refuse a proper plan, the opinion of the Catholics of Ireland would override that of the bishops. The plan of Mr. Gladstone in 1873 was defeated, not by the bishops, but by the Catholic laity, and the first movement against it was by the medical students of the Royal University, of whom I was one. About a hundred students got together to discuss the Bill, and we declared against it, and I have now a copy of the petition which we sent to the Catholic bishops asking them to oppose the Bill, because it threatened to be ruinous and injurious to Ireland. This has not always been a purely ecclesiastical question, for it is one in which the laity are deeply interested, and they have suffered too much to reject any reasonable scheme, even if some of the bishops were opposed to it. What is the present position of this question? It was supposed to be making at one time such good progress in this country that we hoped that even in the life of this Government the pledges made on the eve of a general election might be redeemed. Well, I no longer see any sign of that progress which, according to the right hon. Gentleman, would entitle him to make it a Government question. I do not see anything that entitles us to hope for a settlement on the lines of the gradual growth of public opinion within any reasonable number of years. But are hon. Members prepared to say that so long as public opinion in Great Britain is unconverted so

long must the Catholics of Ireland remain without university education? Have not English statesmen declared a deadly wound is being inflicted upon the life of Ireland? Let it be remembered that the public opinion which is to be changed before anything is done is that of the people who are not suffering from the grievance. We have heard about the liberality of Trinity College, and nothing more unreal than those declarations can be imagined. The governing body is purely Protestant; the Provost is a Protestant Minister and controversialist. I will put a test to the hon. Gentleman. The Government have, as I understand, the appointing of the Provost. Suppose they appointed Father Delaney or Father Finlay, would the Protestants of Ireland exhibit their liberality by accepting him? They told us to capture Trinity College. Why? Because they knew there is not a shadow of a chance of its being done. There would be a nice uproar if we were to attempt it. Talk as you may, it will remain a Protestant institution. Then, as to the Queen's Colleges, we know they are not attended by Catholics, whoever they may be presided over by. There is only one Catholic on the governing body of Galway College, which is in the most Catholic province in Ireland, and only the other day they removed a Catholic and appointed a Protestant president. Then, as to the Royal University, it is stated that we have it in our hands, and that it is altogether a purely Catholic institution. Even if that were so, it would not solve the question, because the Royal University does not teach anyone. It teaches nothing, and there is no more futile solution of a great problem like this than to try to palm off an examining board upon us and say, "You have got there all you want." Even if we had the Royal University entirely in our hands, it would not solve the question, nor would it go an appreciable distance towards it. As a matter of fact, I find, according to the last return, that the governing body of that institution consists of nineteen Protestants and fifteen Catholics. It looks now as if the question was to be put back for fifty years or more, during which time the younger men of our country are to be denied this education, which is their chief asset, for in the brains of our people and our poor, in my judgment, lies the greatest wealth of Ireland. We are told we are to wait until the prejudices of Eng[illegible] men are allayed and assuaged. [illegible] in Ireland things are going [illegible] from bad to worse. An hon. M[illegible] truly said that under the pr[illegible] system we have a purely clerical [illegible] drawing five or six hundred a [illegible] indirectly, and he seemed to think th[illegible] way to settle this question was [illegible] crease that endowment. Was there [illegible] a greater instance of perversity? [illegible] object to endow a great University [illegible] will do the work which is needed [illegible] will compete with Trinity College [illegible] others in the light of day, but you [illegible] a small endowment to leak out [illegible] purely denominational college—a [illegible] with reference to which you know not[illegible] And yet you say you will not end[illegible] you will not break your great princ[illegible] Bnt you are doing it, and you are d[illegible] it in the worst possible way, because [illegible] being done without restraint, and [illegible] mean dirty way which does not [illegible] Irishmen. Ought that fact not to [illegible] home to the mind of any hon. Me[illegible] of this House who approaches [illegible] subject in an honest way, the a[illegible] state in which you have handled [illegible] question? Let me direct the atten[illegible] of the House to two aspects of [illegible] question. This question has been d[illegible] with too much as a religious [illegible] There are two aspects which have be[illegible] neglected and overlooked. The first [illegible] these is higher education generally, a[illegible] altogether from the question of relig[illegible] Will you get any man in Ireland who [illegible] really working for higher education [illegible] stand up and say that he thinks it [illegible] satisfactory? I could take up considerable time quoting great authorities in Ireland to show that it is very unsatisfactory. Dr. Hamilton has declared over and over again that he desires most earnestly [illegible] settlement of the claims of Catholics, not only in the interests of the Catholics themselves, but also in the interests of his own college and of higher education. The result of persistently denying to the Irish Catholics their reasonable demand has been to disorganise the whole system of university education, for it has created that unrest and uncertainty which must be fatal to its successful development, and, as the hon. Member for South Aberdeen said, the result of this persistent denial of the claims of the Catholics has been that every educational problem connected with Ireland is judged

rom an educational, but from a al point of view. That is why you us a Royal University endowed a large sum of money, and although skimmed over the sore it has done ng to elevate the higher education country. Therefore I say that not are you inflicting, by persisting in policy, a great grievance on the s of the population in Ireland, but re injuring, stunting, and interfer- with the natural development of education in every part of Ireland. aiming this university for Irish lics I have always endeavoured to home to the House the fact that I t it not only from a religious point w but also from a national point w. What have been the traditions inity College? It was established time of bitter race hatred and per- on. It was alien in its faith, in all aditions and in all its spirit, t remains so to this hour. If to give proof of that statement I go no further than the extraordi- evidence of Professor Atkinson and sor Mahaffy before the Intermediate tion Commission, who said it had d Celtic learning with contempt, its shame be it said, had left that to be done by French and German rs from the most distant parts of e, who learn the language of our y and write those magnificent on the literature of Ireland. y College has done nothing to age the learning of our country. treated it in a hostile spirit, and when ickenson the other day was examined the Intermediate Education Com- n on the question of the teaching language, he gave evidence which I e to say astonished and shocked Celtic scholar in Europe, for his edge of the ancient language of d was an insult to the whole y, and he was backed up by r great authority who covered our t language and literature with con- and scorn. That is only one of aracteristic manifestations of the which has driven Irish Catholics from Trinity College. Therefore, you talk about opening wide those you talk absurdity and nonsense, e it is impossible that the great ude of Irish people would ever find elves at home within the walls of y College. Therefore, I claim for Irish Catholics not only a Catholic university to which the Catholic can resort, but a national university where the Celtic spirit of our people will have full and fair play. I hear people talking about the multiplication of universities degrading education in Ireland. I ask—has the multiplication of universities degraded education in Scotland and in Germany? Can anyone say that we have in Ireland a university which gives fair play to culture racy of the soil and characteristic of the people? The Irish people say to those who have enjoyed Trinity College for three centuries, "Keep your university; we do not desire to interfere with it; but we say give to the people of Ireland a university which can compete with yours in generous rivalry." We want a university with the national spirit of Ireland, a university instinct with the national spirit of the people of Ireland. We have offered over and over again to the unreasoning prejudices of this House the fullest safeguards against persecutions or against narrowness of teaching, and I can assure the House, speaking for the laymen of Ireland, and I feel sure also for the vast number of the bishops and priests of Ireland, that we desire only to have a free university, based upon a liberal constitution, and able to compete with the University of Dublin and other kindred bodies in Ireland; and in my judgment it will be one of the wisest acts that this House ever did if it frankly and freely offers this university to Ireland. I beg of the Government to approach the question frankly, and not to make it a matter of some miserable political bargain. I believe in my heart and my soul that if the First Lord of the Treasury had the courage—and he has great courage—to put down upon the Table of this House a Bill drafted in the spirit of his own speeches, and say he wanted, without reference to political interest, to settle this question in the interests of higher education in Ireland, he would carry the Bill, and that many who had formerly opposed him would no unite with him in carrying it into law.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rise with great reluctance to speak on the present occasion, not because my zeal has cooled in the cause which has been so ably advocated on both sides of the House in favour of higher education in Ireland,

suited to the wants and wishes of Roman Catholics in that country, but because I feel that I have so often spoken in this House and out of it, have made so many speeches, and written so many letters, upon this one theme that I really have nothing new to say to the House; no argument to advance which I have not already developed to the best of my ability; no new consideration to urge on the House or the British public with which they are not familiar, or with which they might not be if they have followed closely the course of these discussions. But, at the same time, as the question has been raised, I suppose I can hardly allow this discussion to draw to its legitimate conclusion without saying a few words, in addition to the many I have used, in advocacy of the same great cause of national education which I have now, as I have always had, closely at heart. The hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment and some others who have followed him in the debate have criticised, in a most friendly spirit, I admit, but have still criticised the independent attitude which I have from the first taken up on this subject. They seem to think it inconsistent with the position which I have the honour to hold on this bench and in the Government that I should have, without previous consultation with my colleagues and without obtaining their assent, advanced, publicly, my opinion on a great subject of public importance. I admit that is a course which ought rarely to be taken by a Minister of the Crown. I admit fully that independent missionary action should, on the whole and as a rule, be left to persons outside the corporate life of a Government. But I would remind the House that the opinions I expressed as to this reform in the letter which has been more than once alluded to, and in speeches I have delivered since the present Government was formed, are not new opinions of mine, but date back to more than ten years ago, when, as Irish Secretary, I was responsible for the Government of Ireland. At that time I expressed very much the views I have since advocated. I expressed them with the knowledge of my colleagues, and having put my hand to the plough I did not think it consistent with my own personal honour or the duty I owe to the House or the country to turn back; and that which I stated in 1889 as a member of the Government I have felt it my duty to press on public attention ever since. While quite recognising the inexpediency of members of the Government carrying on a propaganda on their own account upon any particular subject of public policy, I would ask the House to remember that when a missionary enterprise of this sort is begun under the conditions which I have described, I think it is not in the public interest that it should be abandoned by those who have started it; and for my own part I mean in the future, as I have done in the past, to do all that I can to convert my countrymen to the views which I hold with extreme and almost passionate earnestness. Having made that frank statement of my views to the House, they must not ask me to do more than I can do. It is not my business to refrain from speech on this subject unless I can say that it is the Government policy which I describe. It is not the Government policy. It is a policy largely held, I believe, on this side of the House—largely and increasingly held among friends of mine, increasingly large. I know that, not only on that side of the House, but on this, there are a large number of Gentlemen who differ from me upon this question, who have a perfect right to differ, and whom I have no right to coerce in this matter, whom I shall convert if I can, but, if I cannot, who have as good a right to their own opinion as I have to mine. I pass, therefore, from the personal aspect of the question to another aspect which may, in a certain sense, be regarded as personal also. I suggested a particular plan for dealing with the problem in the letter I wr[illegible] beginning of last year. That [illegible] to me to get over a great man[illegible] It is a plan which I still thin[illegible] respects better than any al[illegible] has been suggested. But [illegible]

-inctly understood that so long as the in object of that scheme is carried out are not by what machinery that result attained. I have no personal interest my own patent. I dare say better plans plans more congenial to Irish sentiment may be started. If they are started, I they carry out the main object which have in view—which is that of proing a system of higher education which I meet the wants of Catholics—I abandon own plan most gladly. Not a single word propose to say to-night will be in defence the particular scheme which I have vocated, or will be intended to suggest at no better plan may not be hammered t by other minds than mine and may t receive, both in Ireland and in this untry, a larger measure of support an my scheme has, as yet, been able obtain. I will break my own rule by ying one word in defence of certain pects of the scheme which I pounded. In my judgment the university hich I desired to see established was an ndenominational university. I have been old by letter, by speech, and otherwise, hat the university I proposed to start as undenominational only in name. I ad hoped that a university on that plan ould have been felt to conform absotely to the principles of legislation laid own in 1873, and that it would not ave been open to any gentleman to say at the principles of the Abolition of ests Act had been evaded by such a niversity. I still hold that view. What as the principle of the Act of 1873? It as that no place should be given because f religion, that no place should be witheld because of religion, that in the disribution of endowments, in the granting f education, religion should be put absotely upon one side. That is the priniple of the Act of 1873, and I maintain hat that principle would be absolutely arried out by a university founded upon he plan which I ventured to sketch out t is said in reply to that, "Oh, but, fter all, the governing body are going o be Roman Catholics, or in the main Roman Catholics, and probably in consequence of that a great many of the professors will be Roman Catholics. That is an evasion of the Tests Act." Was a more shallow argument, an argument which took less account of the actual fact of university education in this country, ever advanced in the House of Commons? I do not believe that there is at this moment, either in the University of Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Victoria University, the Welsh University, Oxford, or Cambridge a single Roman Catholic professor.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): Yes, one—there is Lord Acton.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Quite true; but, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite reminds me, Lord Acton is professor on a subject which would not be endowed by public funds in the new university; so that it is absolutely true to say that at this moment in the Universities of England and Scotland there is not one Roman Catholic professor on any subject which would be endowed under the scheme which I ventured to propose. Ninety-nine per cent. of the students, I believe, are Protestants, and yet all these universities carry out the spirit of the Act of 1873. Then, I ask, how can it be said that a university in Ireland, which would be only Roman Catholic in the sense that the governing body would be in the main Roman Catholic, and which might be in the sense—though that we cannot tell beforehand—that a majority of the professors would be Roman Catholic, how can that in common sense and in common honesty be described as a violation of the Act of 1873? It is untrue to say that such a university would be undenominational only in name. On the contrary, it would be undenominational in precisely the same sense as, and to the full extent to which, any university now existing within the four seas is undenominational at the present moment. I hope, therefore, that that argument will not be urged against the plan I proposed, whatever else may be urged against it, and that it will

henceforth be allowed to die a natural death. Then, while on this subject of the Tests Act, I must say one word about something which fell from my right hon. friend the Member for Dublin University, who made a very interesting speech earlier in the evening. He said that the doors of Trinity College were thrown widely open, that Roman Catholic students would be welcome, and that if need be a Roman Catholic chapel would be built, and a Roman Catholic faculty of theology would be established. I think that is a new policy.

*MR. LECKY: I said there is now a Presbyterian professor in Trinity College to teach Presbyterian theology, and Trinity College would be willing to make a corresponding appointment of a Roman Catholic professor. I do not know that it has ever been proposed to educate the priests there.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps I may have pressed my right hon. friend's observations farther than he intended, but it was quite unintentional. What I want to say is, I should greatly regret that any change should be made in the Protestant traditions of Trinity College. Hon. Gentlemen who object to this scheme for educating Roman Catholics would like to see Trinity College do for Roman Catholics all it does for Protestants. I have no such hope or desire. Trinity College, from the very moment of its inception, has been in spirit a Protestant institution, and I am sufficiently prejudiced, if you choose to put it in that way, to desire that in spirit it should be a Protestant institution to the end of time. I should regard with something like dismay the intrusion, as I should regard it, into Trinity College of a great body of Jesuit professors, or the establishment of Roman Catholic professorships, or any change in Trinity College which would make the proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants at all correspond to the proportion of Protestants to Roman Catholics in the whole of Ireland. Much rather than see any result of that sort, I should prefer to see some other university or college established which would carry out the object my right hon. friend and I have equally at heart. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen made a speech shortly before the dinner-hour, the practical object of which I found it very difficult to understand. He spoke, as he always speaks, with great knowledge of his subject and great facility of expression, but I could not discover at the end of his speech what it was he wanted, what he objected to, or what he desired to see established. It was a happy balance of argument. Any gentleman unexpectedly called out of the House in the middle of the speech would have thought, when he came in again, that the right hon. Gentleman was discussing the other side of the question to that he was speaking on when he went out. But there is one special point in the speech I should like to call attention to. He said, citing the Blue-book which has been laid on the Table of the House, that he surveyed Europe from end to end, and he found no university in all Europe to meet the Irish demands, and he stated that even in the most Roman Catholic countries on the Continent there are no universities which have a distinctive theological foundation.

MR. BRYCE: I said I did not think the purely Roman Catholic countries were countries from which an analogy could be extracted. Therefore I left those countries on one side, because their conditions were too unlike ours to admit of comparison.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Have I so far forgotten the right hon. Gentleman's speech as to be mistaken in thinking that he dwelt at great length on the University of Bonn and upon the Universities of Belgium and Holland?

MR. BRYCE: But those are not purely Catholic countries.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I mean predominantly Catholic countries like Bavaria and Belgium, and the right hon. Gentleman said they had no University corresponding to that which the Irish desire. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say, it is quite true, that they have theological faculties supported by Government, and not only that, but the Protestant State of Prussia has also theological faculties, and he asked, why should not that plan be adopted with regard to Ireland? A scheme better calculated to unite all parties against it could hardly be conceived than that of leaving other denominations unendowed and endowing a Roman Catholic faculty. The right hon. Gentleman suggests, at a time when the general public opinion is actively hostile to giving public funds for theological purposes, that the Government should endow a Roman Catholic faculty and leave the other denominations untouched.

MR. BRYCE: I did not say that we should endow a Roman Catholic faculty at all. I said we might allow a Roman Catholic faculty to be established in connection with Trinity College. I did not say we should pay for it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have no power to prevent that now. I do not see that that comes within the purview of the House of Commons at all. If the authorities of Trinity College choose to pay for it they can do so to-morrow. I do not see what the House of Commons has to do with it. I do not see what the right hon. Gentleman or I have got to do with the matter. It is wholly outside the present controversy. I do not wish to carry on this controversy with the right hon. Gentleman. But let me say that there is no parallel between the case of Ireland and the case of the Continent. If one wants a true and instructive parallel to the case of Ireland, let him consider the case of Scotland. That may seem a startling proposition at first, but, believe me, it is a proposition that will lead to fruitful conclusions if it be pursued. I was greatly struck by the speech of the hon. Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvon—one of the most interesting and eloquent speeches on an educational subject which I have ever heard in this House. In surveying the recent course of higher education in Wales, the hon. Gentleman said that one of the reasons why the recently founded university at Aberystwith had taken hold of the imagination of the Welsh people, and had lent itself to the needs of higher education in Wales, was because the first head of that university was a man who shared their religious and national sympathies. Well, that observation, which I think a most striking and instructive one, led me to throw back my mind on the history of our Scotch education. I remember that of all parts of the United Kingdom Scotland is the one where university education has, perhaps, done more good, where it has penetrated more completely through every section of the population —upper class, middle class, lower class— and I ask myself whether that result, which everybody applauds, would ever have been attained if the Scotch universities in the periods of their earlier activity had not been in active religious and political sympathy with the people. We are now told that the Irish Roman Catholics are throwing away their opportunities for higher education unless they go to a university whose atmosphere is Protestant, but whose doors are open to them. Supposing the Universities of Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and St. Andrews had manned their teaching staffs from top to bottom with Roman Catholics since the period of the Reformation, supposing that in these universities the great bulk of the students had been, in consequence of that fact, Roman Catholic, does any human being believe, knowing anything of history or of human nature, that these four great universities would have been used by the Scotch as they have been used to such great advantage for 400 years? No, Sir, the proposition is incredible. The Scotch Universities under Roman Catholic management would have been deserted by Scotch Protestants and Scotch Presbyterians, as Trinity College has been deserted by Irish Roman Catholics; and at this moment there would have been as small a proportion of the population of Scotland enjoying the advantage of a university education as, I regret to say, there is in Ireland. Does not that illustration, which, I am quite sure, must go home to the mind of everybody who understands the history

of Scotland, entirely dissipate all this—I will not call it cant—but all this prejudice about the open door of Trinity College? Sir, the open door is not enough. It has never been enough in Scotland, it would never have been enough in England; and I think my own countrymen, at all events, who share to the full the fears of any scheme of endowing what could be truly called Roman Catholic education, ought, from their own experiences, to support me at all events in giving to Ireland a system of which we have seen the admirable fruits in our own country. After all, I think this question would be settled if hon. Gentlemen would approach it in a practical spirit—if they would not lay down abstract principles of legislation, but would ask themselves what it is that is wanted and how that want is to be satisfied. The want is a plain and simple one. It is the want of higher education to the great bulk of the Irish people. What is the difficulty? It is this—that in England and in Scotland and in the North of Ireland there is a strong feeling that you cannot minister to this need for higher Roman Catholic education in Ireland without giving undue strength to the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy and promoting in some way the growth of the Roman Catholic form of Christianity. Well, Sir, nobody who knows the history of this country would undervalue the force of that view. If I were to say all I think upon the theological aspect of this question I am afraid I should say something which would justly offend the susceptibilities of my Roman Catholic hearers, and which would be regarded by them as an example of my bigotry and prejudice. But my quarrel with my fellow-countrymen, if quarrel it is to be called, is not as to the dangers that they anticipate from any great growth or extension of Roman Catholic opinion in this country, because I should agree with them in the fears based upon that. My quarrel with them is of quite a different kind. I am wholly unable to understand, and have never been able to see even the beginning of a ground for understanding, how they arrive at the conclusion that the promotion of higher education among Roman Catholics in Ireland is to aggravate the evils which they fear from the Roman Catholic religion. Let us, for the sake of argument, admit that the Roman Catholic form of theology has shown itself inimical in history to the expansion of true liberty, either political liberty or the liberty of thought. Let us admit, for the sake of argument, that it has been hostile to progress in science, to freedom in philosophy, to Biblical criticism, to religious progress, to all the advancements in learning which, I think, with some justice Protestantism claims for itself. Let us grant that. I cannot ask my Roman Catholic hearers to grant that, but let us Protestants grant it. Tell me how this promotion of higher education in Ireland is to aggravate those evils? The Roman Catholics are there. Two-thirds of the population are Roman Catholics. You have tried to prevent them from being Roman Catholics, I grieve to say, in the last three centuries by laws which an Englishman or Scotchman can hardly mention now without a blush. You have persecuted them; you have made them incapable of the ordinary rights of citizenship; you have kept them out of every lucrative employment; you have oppressed them in every conceivable way, from the Revolution in 1688 until the abolition of those abominable laws which the progress of civilisation and humanity—[An IRISH MEMBER: Not all abolished yet]—until their practical abolition by the growth of humanity and civilisation. But you have totally failed by that method to diminish the number of Roman Catholics in Ireland. You have got, therefore, to deal with them. Are they likely to be less prejudiced because they are more educated? Will a knowledge of the classics, of mathematics, of science, of engineering—will a general survey of the intellectual progress of the world aggravate and augment those dangers which you, perhaps not unjustly, fear from Roman Catholicism? I am utterly unable to understand the frame of mind which conceives such a thing possible. I do not in the least believe that university education will be an instrument for the conversion of Roman Catholics to Protestantism: but I do believe that, if the evils which we believe to result, at all events, from the growth of Roman Catholicism in some of its forms exist now in Ireland, they will be diminished rather than aggravated by anything you can do in the way of higher education. Take the case of Germany. I do not believe that the actual proportion between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants in Germany has in the last two or three generations been materi-

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

ally altered. At all events, I have no grounds for believing that it has been altered in favour of the Protestants. And yet there you have University education and can see what education can do for the great Roman Catholic population, because the German Roman Catholics are by universal admission, by the admission of every student in every branch of knowledge, the most advanced, the most enlightened, and the most learned of any of their co-religionists. I think that is a strong evidence of what education will do; and, though I am quite aware that what I am saying is not and cannot be agreeable to my Roman Catholic hearers, it strengthens the arguments I wish to press upon the House from the Protestant point of view, from the point of view of those who believe that from freedom of knowledge and investigation the great progress of the future is to be expected. To them I appeal not to keep under a cloud of ignorance this great mass of our fellow-countrymen, but to allow them to enjoy, as we enjoy, all the fruits of higher education, all the lessons which the learning of the world can give us, all that interchange of ideas which is making civilised Europe gradually one great intellectual community. Sir, that is the appeal which I venture to make to my Protestant friends. One other thing I would like to say, and only one, before I sit down. Holding these views, I do think it is the duty of the Irish Members and of the Irish hierarchy and the leaders of Roman Catholic thought in Ireland, to make it perfectly clear to this House and to the country, that what they desire is education and not the domination of ecclesiastical influence. The hon. Gentleman who last sat down I think indicated that that, at all events, was his view; and that everything that can be said, and that everything that can be done will be done, to show that the scheme of university teaching would be freely and fully accepted by the whole Roman Catholic population in Ireland—that everything, as I have said, will be done to obviously safeguard the interests of education, and to show that, in the opinion of the Irish people, those interests do not necessarily require the predominant influence of the hierarchy over education. Everything of that kind will do more to convert the British people to my view of what is required for Ireland than the most ingenious arguments which I am able to lay before the House of Commons, because that is the fear that exists on both sides of the House—they think that everything that is done for Irish higher education is calculated to confer additional power on the Irish hierarchy; and that everything that you do, every penny that you give to establish a university, gives additional prerogative to the Irish priest and to the Irish bishops. I believe that to be entirely erroneous. But it does not rest with me to dissipate that error. I have no power to make these things clear to the minds of my countrymen. That rests, and must rest, with the leaders of Roman Catholic thought in Ireland, ecclesiastical and lay. Let it be understood that this is to be a lay and not an ecclesiastical question. Let it be clearly understood that this is to be a lay university for laymen, for lay Roman Catholics—I do not mean that bishops are not to be on the governing body, but that it is lay in its essence. Let that once be driven home to the conscience of the English people, and I think they will no longer deny this great reform to Ireland. But until that is done you will always have to meet a mass of prejudice, of weighty objection which no dialectical success will be able to overcome. Therefore, I make an appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite who can do something in this matter where I am powerless, at all events to do their best to see that this object is accomplished. Having made this appeal to Irishmen, let me make an appeal also to Englishmen and Scotchmen. It is often said, with partial truth, but with some truth, that great reforms for Ireland have only been extorted from this country by agitation and by violence. That certainly is true. It is true, all admit, of one great change. I mean the grant of Roman Catholic emancipation. Sir, that great reform had behind it a vast mass of popular opinion in Ireland which practically made the government of the country almost impossible until the reform was granted. There is no possibility of any such event occurring in connection with university education. The cause of university education is a national cause, but it appeals only to the few. It has behind it, and it can have behind it, no great popular passion, no vast demonstration of force, no armed throng, no refusal of taxation, no great exhibition of popular feeling like that which signalised the years 1828-29. In

my judgment that is an additional reason why this cause should be regarded by Englishmen and Scotchmen with sympathy and impartiality. Justice cannot be extorted from us in this case by violence. What we give we shall have to give freely. It is not in the power of any agitator to raise Ireland upon the subject of higher education for Ireland, though I think that higher education for Ireland will probably do more for that country than many of the things which have disturbed the peace and threatened almost the unity of the Empire. Is not that a reason why we, the great Protestant majority, knowing and believing in our own strength, should grant to Ireland what the highest minds in Ireland desire? This is no mob demand for other people's property, for the break-up of the Empire, for any other toy or any other cause in favour of which a demagogue might appeal to his fellow-countrymen. This is no demagogue's theme. It will raise no great passion. In these circumstances it behoves us, sitting as an impartial tribunal, without prejudice, to give that which we believe will be for the benefit of our fellow-countrymen. And those of us who think, as I think, that the higher education of a country is a thing which does not concern only or mainly those who enjoy that higher education, but that it permeates all ranks, that it touches all interests, that it is an absolute necessity of healthy national life — surely we are bound, whether it be for our personal interest or not, but simply as men responsible before Heaven and before posterity for the better government of the country whose citizens we are, to do everything we can to give to Ireland that which Scotland and England have so long enjoyed in such full and ample measure. That is all I have got to say on the main question. May I suggest, on the question of procedure, that hon. Gentlemen opposite, having had a debate in which, I venture to think, the argument has largely gone their way, should abstain from a division. [HON. MEMBERS: No.] The reason I make that suggestion—it is not an appeal —is this. The question before the House is that you, Mr. Speaker, do now leave the chair. For that motion there will be, necessarily and by immemorial tradition of the House, Government tellers. For that motion, all the members of the Government, including myself, whatever their convictions upon the question which we have been discussing, will vote; and a large number of gentlemen on this side of the House, who probably sympathise with hon. Gentlemen opposite, will have to vote against their tellers, or they will have to abstain. In those circumstances, it is evident that a division will not represent the feeling of the House, and in the interests of the cause for which I have pleaded I fear at too great length—[HON. MEMBERS: No.]—I suggest that no division should be taken.

MR. J. MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): I have no idea of entering into controversy with the right hon. Gentleman, who has stated the case for the Amendment with a force, an eloquence, and a passion, which certainly no other Member of the House could equal. I have heard nearly the whole of it, and I am sure that, in the opinion of everyone, it is one of those which do high honour to the House as a deliberative assembly. But the right hon. Gentleman has now raised a new point; he now deprecates going to a division, for a reason the force of which must be recognised. On the supposition that a division was possible I should have pressed the right hon. Gentleman to vote for the motion to which he has given such powerful and efficient support. When so much is owed to the right hon. Gentleman, it would be ungrateful to press him to take a separate action from the other members of the Cabinet. But the position is rather a novel one in our political history. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken in favour of this concession to Ireland with a force which neither Mr. Canning nor any other of the great luminaries of the past could have surpassed. At an earlier stage of the evening the hon. Member for East Mayo read a passage from a speech of the Duke of Devonshire to the effect that, so far as he could foresee, this question could not become a practical question in the lifetime of any man living. Here are, therefore, two members of the same Cabinet taking directly opposite views. This is not the first time that there have been open questions in a Cabinet. I think as far as to-night's division is concerned the plea of the right hon. Gentleman is a good one, but I think also we have a moral right to call on him on the very first occasion on which a vote

can fairly be taken on this question to express his own views in the same way in which Mr. Canning on the one hand and Sir Robert Peel on the other, dealing with open questions in the Cabinet went, as it were, to the stake for this opinion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I voted for it before. I should have done so if I had had the chance, and I think I did.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman voted for it on the first occasion on which we raised this question.

MR. J. MORLEY: Of course if the question arose in a manner which would make it a confidence vote, then I agree the right hon. Gentleman would not be expected to vote. But we now understand that whenever the occasion is presented the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to go into the lobby with hon. Gentlemen from Ireland. [MR A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] Any stranger listening to this debate to-night—I say it without the least disrespect to those who have spoken against the motion—who had heard the speeches, and especially the speech of the Leader of the House, would have said "That question will pass without a division." Looking at the state of opinion on both sides of the House, I believe the day will come, not only within the time contemplated by the Duke of Devonshire, but within a perfectly reasonable time, when the House will be unanimous in making the concession for which the right hon. Gentleman has so powerfully pleaded. No doubt there is now some division of opinion on this side as well as on the other, but here and there the objections which are felt will melt away before the arguments the right hon. Gentleman has used, and which he has pressed with such extraordinary power and sincerity. So far as I am concerned there is no man in the House more unwilling to take a single step in the direction of the extension or strengthening of the idea of the denominational system, either in connection with higher education or any other stage of education, than I am, but my own conversion in respect to this question was effected—as the right hon. Gentleman told us his opinions were changed—by Irish experience. I think the country at this moment is inclined to lend a more favourable ear than was the case for a good many years to Irish feelings and opinions, and I am very sanguine after the speech to which we have just listened that this great question has made a great and marked stride towards a complete solution.

MR. T. M. HEALY: My hon. friend the Member for Waterford has asked me to say a word in reference to the request of the Leader of the House. Before I do so may I thank him on behalf of the Irish party and of the Catholics of Ireland for the very noble and elevated speech he has made. Perhaps I may say that the position of the right hon. Gentleman in advocating this question bears, I have sometimes thought, a singular resemblance, both in elevation of style and dignity of tone, to that occasionally taken up by the late Mr. Gladstone. The right hon. Gentleman asks us to assuage the prejudices of the English people. Mr. Gladstone used to make the same appeal. He used to ask us when we were fighting for Home Rule, to convince the English people that we were not seeking for separation. The right hon. Gentleman asked us on the present occasion to so assuage the prejudices of the English people that their bigotry will disappear, and that for the first time the mintage from the Irish mould will be current coin. While giving the right hon. Gentleman all his due—and I think there is no ungenerous sentiment towards him in this quarter of the House, whatever may have been the differences which have divided us in former times—I will venture to state to the House in a few words the reasons why we are unable to comply with the demand of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman, I have said, sometimes reminds me of Mr. Gladstone. There is another great statesman also to whom in his attitude to-night he bears a singular resemblance. I refer to the late Mr. Pitt. He was in favour of Catholic Emancipation, the liberty of the slave, and Parliamentary Reform. He advocated these three great principles with great energy and great vigour, but he failed to convert the Cabinet of that day, as is explained in the great history published by the righ

hon. Gentleman the Member for Trinity College. Mr. Pitt remained in the Cabinet and Catholic Emancipation, the Abolition of Slavery, and Parliamentary Suffrage were not advanced, and for years all these great questions remained in the same situation as when Mr. Pitt's platonic opinions were uttered. The Irish Members are politicians. Surveying the field of politics we cannot leave out of our consideration the probability, in the first place, that a dissolution may take place in the present session, and in the second place that in any changes in politics that may take place the Duke of Devonshire, whose speech has been quoted, and who is probably one of the most dogged statesmen in Europe, may in any regrettable change in the leadership of the present Government become Prime Minister of England. Under these circumstances I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will feel that this is distinctly the one occasion on which we should have a division in the House of Commons on this question, in view of the present position of politics in this country. Three times when this question has been before the House we have abstained from going into the lobby. We were told on every one of these occasions that it was a matter in which the confidence of the Government was involved, and we were appealed to not to take a division and not to imperil this question. From that time to the present is ten years, and so far as I can make out, beyond the noble speeches of the right hon. Gentleman, this question has not advanced. There is another reason, and I do not hesitate to state it. I would remind the House that the occasion seized on by the Duke of Devonshire to make his *non possumus* declaration was St. Patrick's Day of last year. It is quite true that on St. Patrick's Day of this year, as far as expression is concerned, a very different tone and temper have been alleged to prevail in England. I never have, so far as I can recollect, in any way associated the monarch of this realm with either her Ministers or this House. On the contrary, speaking for myself, I should prefer, after my experience in this House, to be governed by one monarch rather then by 600, with, perhaps, I should say, the 400 over the way thrown in. Speaking for myself, I do think the present occasion is emphatically one on which we should show the people of Ireland that this time, when Irish soldiers are dyeing the African veldt with their blood, and when the monarch of this realm is going across, for the first time in fifty years, to visit our country to receive the reception of its inhabitants, is the very moment seized on by this Protestant House of Commons to trample on the dearest convictions of the Catholics of Ireland. As far as my judgment is concerned, there was never a more favourable time for taking a division. I observe that His Holiness the Pope has telegraphed to high authorities in this country congratulating the Catholics of Ireland on the honour they are to receive. I trust to-morrow that when the news of the division in what we were told to-night is a Protestant Parliament reaches these high authorities, they may understand what it is that for three long centuries the Catholics of Ireland have struggled for, and that they may understand our determination, no matter what may be your statements on an occasion like this, to record from the bottom of our hearts our resolution to continue the struggle for our independence.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 177; Noes, 91. (Division List No. 78.)

AYES.

Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hon A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hon Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, Rt Hon W. W. B. (Hants.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer

Mr. T. M. Healy.

a, Viscount
ıgton, Sir William
l, Douglas Harry
;s, Rt. Hon. Jesse
n, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
allis, Fiennes S. W.
Alexander (Glasgow)
, Hon. Henry
ı, Viscount

;, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
, Arthur
, John K. D. Wingfield-
ıs, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
rd, Sir Wm. Theodore
Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart

George Denison
l, Sir T. George
'es, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
ıson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Admiral (Eastbourne)
George H.
', Sir R. Bannatyne
ık, Joseph Thomas
r, Ernest
r, Henry William
, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)

vay, William Johnson
, Sydney
Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Charles Tyrrell
n, Sir Augustus F.
worthy, Major-General
Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
en, George J. (Sussex)
Ernest (West Ham)
e, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
n, John
le, Hon. Ronald
h, Ellis J.
Sir Cameron
n, Sir Wm. Brampton

y, Thomas Frederick
ton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
ıry, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
;t, Sir James Horner
;, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
l, Walter
r, Augustus
ırson, Alexander
ɔn-Hodge, R. Trotter

Horniman, Frederick John
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Jacoby, James Alfred
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swans.

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees

Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Llewelyn, Sr Dillwyn-(Swansea
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maddison, Fred.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
More, R. J. (Shropshire)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute

Newdigate, Francis Alexander

Oldroyd, Mark
O'Neill, Hon. Robt. Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pierpoint, Robert
Plunkett, Rt. Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert

Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James

Runciman, Walter
Ryder, John Herbert Dudley

Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Steadman, William Charles
Stephens, Henry Charles
Steward, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strachey, Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest

Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunt'n
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.
Williams, Jos'ph Powell-(Birm.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES;—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

ıam, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
ɔse, Robert
., Sir William Reynell
l, Alfred
th, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
ı, Sir John (Yorkshire)
ı, M. (Limerick, W.)

E. (Cork, S.)
l, Augustine
, Edward

, James Laurence
l, Patrick Geo. Hamilt'n
y, John Joseph

Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)

Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Emmott, Alfred
Engledew, Charles John

Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
Farrell, Thomas J. (Kerry, S.)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis

Gibney, James
Gilhooly, James
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)

Haldane, Richard Burdon

Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harrington, Timoth
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis

Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordon, Jeremiah

Kenyon, James
Kilbride, Denis

Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lough, Thomas

Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr MA (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Malcolm, Ian
Minch, Matthew
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Monk, Charles James
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Montrose)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morris, Samuel
Murnaghan, George

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O Dowd, John
O'Keeffe, Francis Arthur
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William

Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie

Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Ox. Unv.
Tanner, Charles Kearns

Ure, Alexander

Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)

Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

MIDWIVES [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk, in the Chair.]

Question again proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such Expenses as the Treasury may certify to have been necessarily incurred by the General Medical Council under any Act of the present session, to secure the better training of Midwives, and to regulate their practice."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) said he was sure that the Government were not in such a hurry with the Bill that they need rush it through at that late hour. Nothing would be lost if the Bill stood over in order that it might be considered by hon. Members. No explanation had been given regarding it, and money should not be voted without every hon. Member understanding what it was voted for. He did not believe there was any great necessity for the Bill. If there were it would have been introduced years before and passed. He hoped the Bill would not be preceeded with under the circumstances.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 26th March, 1900.

VISCOUNT GORT.

Ordered and Directed, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Viscount Gort to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland. And it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Colonial Bank.

Pontefract Park.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Central London Railway Bill

ought to be dispensed with.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the

Glasgow District Tramways Bill [H.L.]

ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 1, 2, and so much of No. 3 as lies outside the burgh of Dumbarton, be struck out of the Bill.

Read, and agreed to.

COWES PIER BILL [H.L.].

Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Committed for Friday next.

BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].

Committee to meet on Friday next.

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [H.L.].

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Committee to meet to-morrow.

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [H.L.].

Committee to meet on Friday next.

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 5th instant and on Monday last discharged; and Bill committed.

RUGELEY GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

EXMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

EXMOUTH AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord De Mauley be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Viscount Templetown; read, and agreed to.

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (RECRUITING).

Annual Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for 1899.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

General Report and Statistics for 1898. Part IV. Colonial and Foreign Statistics. Statistics relating to persons employed, output, and accidents at mines and quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report and tables for the year 1899.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee negatived. Then Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to order), and dispensed with. Bill read 3ª, and passed.

COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.].

COPYRIGHT (ARTISTIC) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I understand that Lord Balfour is desirous, when these Bills are read a second time, of making a statement on behalf of the Board of Trade, and as he unfortunately cannot be here to-day I have consented to put off the Second Reading until Thursday. But, as time is going on, I hope, whether Lord Balfour can be here on Thursday or not, that the Government will see that there is someone in your Lordships' House who will be able to make whatever statement is thought desirable on their behalf. I beg to ask leave to put off the Second Reading of these Bills till Thursday.

Second Reading put off to Thursday next.

CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN) BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, That the Bill be now read the third time.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I desire to call attention to a small point on Clause 9. I apologise for not having raised it when the Bill was in Committee, but unfortunately I was not aware of it until Saturday morning, and as the Committee stage was taken on Friday I could not bring it before your Lordships until to-day. Clause 9 provides that the Registrar General may, at the request of certain local authorities, cause abstracts to be prepared giving statistical information with respect to the areas over which those local authorities have control. The local authorities named in the Bill are the councils of any county, borough, or urban district. I think it is desirable that the number of these authorities should be slightly increased, and that the privileges which are given to county, borough, and urban district councils should also be extended to school boards and school attendance committees. I think it will be evident to your Lordships that the information to be obtained from the census returns would be especially useful to such authorities as school boards and school attendance committees, who are concerned with the number of children within their district of school age or above it. The clause, as I would propose to amend it, would be as follows:—

"The Registrar General may, if he thinks fit, at the request and cost of the Council of any County, Borough, or Urban District, or of any School Board, or School Attendance Committee, cause abstracts to be prepared by the Superintendent Registrar of the District comprising such County, Borough, Urban District, School Board, or School Attendance Committee, containing statistical information which can be derived from the Census Returns, but is not supplied by the Census Report, and which, in his opinion, the Council, School Board, or School Attendance Committee may reasonably require."

Your Lordships will see from the clause that the cost of preparing any such returns is thrown on the authority that asks for them, and also that the Registrar General is in no way obliged to give a return unless it is made out to his satisfaction that the return is a desirable one, and one that should be given. Of course, I am entirely in the hands of the Government, but I thought the point was one of sufficient importance to bring forward. If the Government will accept my Amendment I will move it after the Bill has been read the third time.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): The noble Lord has pursued a course which, even in this House, is out of order. He has proposed an Amendment—I do not say it is a very vital Amendment—and he has done so without giving notice of it on the Paper. The only intimation I had of it was just before I came down to the House. Under ordinary circumstances I should not be prepared to allow that omission to interfere with the reasonable wish of the noble Lord, but, unluckily, the Bill has gone down to the Queen for Commission to-morrow, and therefore it is incapable of being altered without causing considerable delay. As the noble Lord is out of court in consequence of his neglect of a reasonable rule of the House, I do not think it is worth while to postpone the Bill. I should prefer that the Bill passed as it is.

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 26th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—

Central London Railway Bill.

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—

Dundee Harbour Bill [Lords].

Menstone Water (Transfer) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

HAMILTON BURGH BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

AIRDRIE, COATBRIDGE, AND DISTRICT WATER TRUST BILL.

MORECAMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL.

OSSETT CORPORATION GAS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

WAKEFIELD CORPORATION MARKET BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

To be read a second time to-morrow.

SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND AND LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords].

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to give leave to the Lord Russell of Killowen to attend to be examined before the Committee on Group B of Private Bills to-morrow at three of the clock.—(*Mr. Oldroyd.*)

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE).

Petition from Bradford, against adoption; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Morpeth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Croydon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from East Ardsley, and Bedford; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from Glasgow (two); Newton Heath; Coggeshall; London (two); Reading (two); Saffron Walden; Nelson; and, Morpeth; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from Clackmannan; and, Sheffield (six); to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition from Newport, against; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL

Petitions, in favour, from Spilsby; Birkenshaw; and, Nelson; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT).

Copy presented, of Return of Prices of Agricultural Produce for the years 1881 to 1899, inclusive [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1899-1900).

Copy presented, Statement showing the Sub-heads of the Army Estimates under which the two Supplementary Estimates for Army Services (War in South Africa) £10,000,000 and £13,000,000, respectively, will be accounted for [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR — COURTS MARTIAL—QUALIFIED DELEGATES OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL.

MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Judge Advocate General has power to nominate a qualified person to confirm the findings and sentences of general courts martial in South Africa, including sentences of death and penal servitude for not less than five years, and to advise the military authorities upon important questions of law; whether a barrister of less than three years standing is to be appointed to discharge these important duties, or which of them, in South Africa, and at what remuneration: and whether findings of courts martial and sentences upon persons other than soldiers in Her Majesty's service in South Africa will be finally dealt with by anyone so nominated or appointed, and whether with or without right of appeal.

MR. MELLOR (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): At the same time may I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to send the Deputy Judge Advocate General to the forces in South Africa to advise the confirming officer with regard to the confirmation or not of the findings of general courts martial, and the military authorities with regard to the important questions of law arising, especially as there can be no appeal.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The power to nominate a qualified person to confirm the findings and sentences of general courts martial in South Africa is not included in the functions discharged by the Judge Advocate General. The confirmation of the findings and sentences by military courts is regulated by Section 54 of the Army Act. The Judge Advocate General has the power to delegate qualified persons to represent him in South Africa. Although such persons would not have the power

to confirm the findings and sentences of general courts martial, they would be entitled to advise the military authorities on questions of law, to withhold confirmation on the ground of illegality, and generally to advise them on questions of law concerning the legality of the findings of courts martial. A barrister of less than three years standing is not to be appointed to discharge those duties. Colonel Sinclair, of the War Office, received a formal deputation to perform those duties, and he is now performing them in South Africa, aided by Lord Basil Blackwood, who is a barrister of more than three years standing. Military law and courts martial only apply to soldiers in Her Majesty's service or persons accompanying the troops holding passes. Civilians as a general rule do not come under the ordinary military law or the jurisdiction of ordinary courts martial.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): As the Judge Advocate General is at present, under the new arrangement, a member of the High Court of Justice, to whom is he responsible for these appointments?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that these legal points must be put to the Attorney General.

WAR MEDALS.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the large number of troops (Colonial, Volunteer, Yeomanry, and Reserve men, now serving in South Africa) who will be discharged at the conclusion of the war, the Government would have the medal which will be given for the South African campaign prepared so that it could be issued to the troops either in South Africa or immediately on their return, thus giving them an opportunity of wearing it while still in uniform.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can assure my hon. friend that this matter will not be lost sight of.

PUBLICATION OF NAVAL BRIGADE DESPATCHES—BATTLE OF GRASPAN.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty can he explain what are the regulations or customs affecting the publication of despatches from naval officers describing the proceedings of naval brigades when acting ashore under the orders and as part of the force of a military general; is the permission of such general required before the Admiralty is at liberty to publish such despatches; is the permission of the Secretary of State for War also required; and, in the case of the naval despatches describing the part taken by the Naval Brigade in the Battle of Graspan, was it necessary to obtain the permission to publish those despatches of General Lord Methuen alone or any other permission besides; and if so, will he state when the necessary permission was applied for by the Admiralty, and why it has been so long delayed, seeing that the military despatches were published nearly two months ago.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There are no regulations that affect the publication of naval despatches from naval officers describing the proceedings of naval brigades when acting ashore with military forces. The custom has been that reports from naval officers under such circumstances have been sent in duplicate, one to the officer in chief command of the army with which the naval brigade was serving, the other to the Commander-in-Chief on the station to which the ship from which the naval brigade was taken was attached. The permission of the general to publish such reports is not required, but clearly he ought to see them, and to have the opportunity of commenting on them if he saw occasion to do so. In reply to the third question, the term "permission" should not apply to the case. But the Admiralty would not publish reports relating to the conduct of the war, for which the Secretary of State is responsible, without giving him the opportunity of expressing his opinion. In the case of the report describing the Battle of Graspan it appeared doubtful whether a duplicate had been sent to Lord Methuen, as ought to have been done, and I am still uncertain whether Lord Methuen has seen it; but I have now arranged, after consultation with the Secretary of State for War, that these reports shall be published in the next *Gazette*.

EXPANSIVE AND EXPLOSIVE BULLETS.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether quantities of explosive and soft-nosed bullets were found concealed in the evacuated encampments of the Boers; and whether many of the British troops have been seriously wounded and maimed by these bullets, and what action he has taken in the matter.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): Lord Roberts has reported the discovery of "expansive" bullets in Cronje's laager and elsewhere. There is no doubt that British troops have been wounded by these bullets. In view of the reply of President Kruger and Mr. Steyn to Lord Roberts' protest no further action at the present time would appear possible.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the hon. Gentleman state where any explosive bullets were found, and on what authority he makes the statement that there is no doubt that British troops have been wounded by expansive bullets?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I make the statement on the authority of a great number of medical reports. I used the word "expansive," and not "explosive," because a large number of the bullets in question are more properly described as expansive. But there have been some sporting bullets used which might be called explosive.

MR. DILLON: Will the hon. Gentleman refer me to the medical reports on which he relies?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Were these expansive and explosive bullets manufactured and supplied by British firms?

[No answer was given.]

SIEGE OF KIMBERLEY—MR. RHODES AND COL. KEKEWICH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, during the siege of Kimberley, Colonel Kekewich, as military commander, suppressed a newspaper under the control of Mr. Rhodes; and what was the reason for this action.

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have no official knowledge of any such matter.

CASUALTIES TO THE FORCE FROM INDIA.

MR. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what have been the total casualties from all causes, up to date, in the troops belonging to the Indian garrison which are employed on active service in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The figures are as follow:—

	Officers.	N-C. Officers and Men.
Killed	15	135
Died of Wounds ...	3	20
Wounded	41	465
Missing	—	338
Reported as prisoners, including 15 wounded ...	19	17
Deaths from disease	2	246
Total ...	80	1,221

MR. MACLEAN: What was the total of the force from India?

*MR. WYNDHAM: Between 7,000 and 8,000.

WARM CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether if a sufficient amount of warm clothing to supply all the troops serving in South Africa is not provided by private benevolence, the War Office authorities will make good the deficiency.

*MR. WYNDHAM: An amount of warm clothing sufficient for preserving the health of the troops is supplied by the War Office, and I can assure the hon. Member that there will be no deficiency in that respect. Public benevolence has, however, contributed additional supplies with the view of enhancing the soldier's comfort. The War Office has taken some pains to discover and to publish descriptions of the articles which can best conduce to that end.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the appeal made by the War Office to the public to provide extra warm clothing for the troops in South Africa, the War Office will undertake that any articles sent out shall be expeditiously distributed immediately on arrival in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to his question of the 16th. I can only repeat that every effort will be made in co-operation with Mr. Gatliff to secure that the troops shall receive such comforts as expeditiously as the movements of the field forces permit.

ARMY COMMISSIONS.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War will he state how many first commissions in the Army have been granted without competition in the last six months; and, in particular, how many to each of the following classes:—non-commissioned officers; candidates in recent competitions who qualified but were not successful; from the Militia, and if any of these had not undergone two trainings; on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, and otherwise; how many in the same period have been obtained by cadets from the Royal Military Academy and Royal Military College; and how many direct commissions it is proposed to give to the Militia, the Volunteers, the Yeomanry, the Malta regiment, the colonies, the universities, the public schools, and the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa respectively.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The number of first commissions in the Army granted without competition during the last six months (September to February) was 364. Eighty-four were given to the ranks, sixty-six to university candidates after a qualifying examination, and the remainder to Militia officers, most of whom had served during two trainings. No recommendations have as yet been received from the Commander-in-Chief, South Africa. During the same period 140 commissions have been given to the cadets of the Royal Military Academy and 231 to the cadets of the Royal Military College. The number of direct commissions to the Regular forces to be offered are:—

To the Militia	... ...	312
" Volunteers	... ...	172
" Malta Artillery	...	2
" Malta Militia	...	4
" Yeomanry	... ...	20
" Colonies	... ...	276
" Universities	... ...	345
" Public Schools	...	30
" Lord Roberts	...	50
Total	... ...	1,211

It must be understood, however, that these numbers are subject to minor variations depending on the way in which our offers are taken up.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: May I ask whether these 1,200 commissions will be given in supersession of the cadets' claims?

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have debated that point, and I think I have said all I have to say on the subject.

COMMISSIONS FOR COLONISTS.

MR. MACLEAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if a number of commissions in the Regular Army have been set apart for the colonies; and if the Colonial Governments have been informed that officers of the Regular Army in England cannot live on their pay, but must be possessed of considerable private means.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. It is believed that colonial candidates are sufficiently informed of the conditions in which British officers live, and no specia communication has been made.

MINTING AT THE CAPE—ENGLISH BANK OFFICIAL AND THE PRETORIA GOVERNMENT.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether an English banking company, with headquarters at Cape Town and Johannesburg, have been affording help to the Pretoria Government in minting operations by the loan of a salaried official of the company, who is employed by them as metallurgist and assayer; and whether such assistance by an Englishman to a foreign govern-

ment with which we are at war is legal; and if not, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take any steps in the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have made inquiries, and am informed that the official in question was engaged by the Transvaal Government in October without communication with the board of the bank, or with the general manager at Cape Town. As soon as the facts became known, he was called upon by the board at once to withdraw from his position and leave the enemy's country. Before these directions had reached him the manager at Johannesburg had issued similar instructions. But the State Secretary at Pretoria refused permission to the official to leave, and his connection with the bank was accordingly terminated. I am informed that the State Secretary of the South African Republic has since reconsidered his decision, and it is believed that the person referred to has left the Transvaal. Voluntary assistance of the kind suggested to a foreign government with which we are at war would not be legal, but under the circumstances above detailed, it does not appear necessary to take any steps in this matter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): What is the banking company referred to?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Bank of Africa.

CODE CABLES TO THE CAPE.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether there exists any valid reason for allowing code messages to be transmitted to Foreign territories, notably to Lorenco Marques, and disallowing them in the case of our own possessions in South Africa; and whether in view of the discontent excited by this discrimination as against our own Colonies, he would undertake to extend to these the privileges in respect of cipher messages promulgated in the recent order.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The discrimination was made on military grounds on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, during the earlier part of the campaign. The Secretary of State for War is prepared to consult Lord Roberts on the subject at an early date.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, whether in regard to the contracts recently made for the supply of forage to the War Office by Underwood and Co., Limited, under the name of John E. Bennett and Sons, his attention has been called to the provisions of Section 41 of the Companies Act, 1862, which provide for the name of a limited company to be affixed conspicuously on the outside of every place where the business of the company is carried on, and the name of the company to be mentioned in (amongst other documents) all notices, advertisements, and other official publications of the company, and in all bills of parcels, invoices, and receipts of the company; whether the provisions of this section were complied with by Underwood and Co., Limited; if not, whether steps will be taken to enforce against the directors and other officials of the company the penalties prescribed by Section 42 of the Companies Act, 1862: and, whether, in all cases of tenders for the supply of goods being made to the War Office by firms trading under a firm name, the War Office will, with a view to avoiding frauds, insist that the names and addresses of the partners in the firm shall, in every case, be mentioned in such tenders.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The point raised by the hon. and learned Member in respect of the Companies Act, 1862, has been referred to the Law Officers of the Crown. The course suggested in the third paragraph of the question had already been decided upon before the question of the hon. Member appeared upon the Paper.

ARMY AND NAVY CONTRACTS—COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government would consider the advisability of appointing a small Parliamentary Committee to examine and report upon the alleged cases of fraud in

connection with Army and Navy contracts.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In ordinary circumstances I should be reluctant to grant an inquiry which would throw a considerable additional burden on a hardly-pressed office. But a most erroneous idea has gained currency that there are facts to conceal, and that there has been a desire to conceal them. We therefore think, in justice to the War Department, that an inquiry is desirable. The possibility of instituting criminal proceedings against certain defaulting contractors is under consideration, and no inquiry can, of course, take place until this question is determined; but I do not imagine that that will involve any long or serious delay.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Pending the appointment of the Committee, will the right hon. Gentleman issue a proclamation offering soldiers protection in the event of their being willing to give evidence before the Committee?

[No answer was given.]

DIRECTOR OF MILITARY EDUCATION.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War why no Vote is proposed in the Estimates for a Director of Military Education; and why the Department has been placed under the Military Secretary.

MR. WYNDHAM: The post of Director General of Military Education was abolished in 1898. The work conducted by the two branches of his Department was in many cases subject to the further consideration of the Adjutant General or of the Military Secretary; and it was considered preferable to bring the work more directly under the charge of these officers. This decision was announced and the reasons fully explained by the Secretary of State on 11th July, 1898.

ROYAL MILITARY SCHOOLS.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any record is kept of the percentage of boys, educated at the Duke of York's School, Chelsea and Dublin, who, not being bandsmen, subsequently join the Army.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Records are kept at the Royal Military Schools, and the figures for the last twelve months are as follows:—Duke of York's School, Chelsea: 401 left the school; of these 160 entered the Army as other than bandsmen. Royal Hibernian Military School: 255 left the school, and of these 154 joined the Army as other than bandsmen.

RIFLE RANGES—KINDER SCOUT.

MR. SEELY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government propose to purchase Kinder Scout for a camping ground and rifle range.

*MR. WYNDHAM: It is not desirable to state where it is contemplated to purchase land for ranges.

INDIA—COUNTERVAILING DUTIES ACT, 1899.

MR. MACLEAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can now say what has been the result of a year's working of the Countervailing Duties Act passed in March, 1899; what amount of revenue the Act has yielded; and what effect it has had on the importation of cane and beet sugar respectively, as compared with the Returns for the years 1897-8 and 1898-9.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): In the telegram from the Viceroy, giving an abstract of the Indian Financial Statement, which was published in the newspapers on Wednesday last, it was mentioned that for the last nine months the imports of beet sugar had fallen off to the extent of 45 per cent., but that the circumstances were such that no conclusion could safely be drawn from the figures. I can add nothing to this, nor can I give as yet the amount of revenue yielded by the countervailing duties. The imports of cane sugar for the same period are not statistically complete, but they are believed to have increased to the extent of about 12 per cent. as compared with the average of the two preceding years.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxi., page 451.

THE BUDGET—EXCESSIVE CLEARANCES FROM BOND.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he sees his way, apart from legal enactment, to make such regulation in the Customs Department as will preclude in future years excessive payments to liberate articles from bond immediately before the introduction of the Budget.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I will inquire into the possibility of doing this; but I do not think it can be done effectually without legislation.

LONDON LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

COLONEL DALBIAC (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a householder resident in any portion of a parish transferred by the Boundary Commission, appointed under the London Government Act of 1899, to another parish is eligible for election on the 1st November, 1900, as a borough councillor for the municipal borough from which he has been transferred, either as a parochial elector or as a resident in the parish twelve months prior to the election.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction and no authority to pronounce any opinion with regard to this matter. It is one of the questions which can be dealt with by an Order in Council under Section 27 (1) (c) of the London Government Act, 1899. I have, however, communicated with the Commissioners, and I understand that the subject is being or will be considered by them and the Privy Council.

EXCESS OF WORKHOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he is aware that in certain parts of the country the number of workhouses is in excess of the requirements; and inasmuch as this entails an unnecessarily large annual expenditure, will he consider the advisability of taking steps to reduce the number of such workhouses.

MR. CHAPLIN: The workhouse accommodation in some cases appears no doubt to be in excess of requirements, but it must be remembered that in order to maintain proper administration in a workhouse, it is necessary that separate accommodation should be provided for each class of inmates and for the sick, and that there should be some spare accommodation for each class for use in case of need, as besides the sick there are seven different classes for whom separate accommodation should be provided; the spare accommodation is often more apparent than real.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY EXTENSION—NEW DWELLINGS.

MR. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received from the London and North-Western Railway Company any scheme for the providing of new dwellings for the inhabitants of the houses in Stanhope Street, Granby Street, and Mornington Road, already acquired by them for the extension of their line, according to the London and North-Western Railway Act, 61 and 62 Vic. c. 234; whether he can state the site of the buildings to be erected, and the number of inhabitants to be provided for; and whether he will take steps to compel the company to perform the conditions of the Act.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): No scheme has yet been submitted by the railway company in this case; but I have been in communication with them in regard to their liabilities under the Act, and shall certainly compel them to comply with its provisions, as I have plainly informed them.

LABOUR BUREAUX—MODEL RULES.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the increasing interest being shown in labour bureaux by the London local authorities, the Labour Department will prepare and issue for their guidance and information a set of model rules for the conduct of labour bureaux, with such other information on the formation and management of such institutions as would be likely to prove of

use to any body intending to institute one.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The Labour Department of the Board of Trade have from time to time published certain information as to the constitution and regulations of labour bureaux in this country and abroad. If the hon. Member will put himself into communication with the Department, he will be able to judge how far the publication of any further information in their possession would answer the purpose of his question. But the Board of Trade are of opinion that before any model code of regulations could be adopted much more experience is necessary of the working of those bureaux than has yet been had.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

SIR BARRINGTON SIMEON (Southampton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the increase in the number of aliens arriving in the United Kingdom who are not stated to be *en route* to other countries; and whether it is the intention of the Government to carry out without further delay the pledge given by them in the Queen's Speech in 1896, by introducing legislation upon the subject.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir, I am aware that there has been an increase in the number of aliens alluded to by the hon. Member, and a much larger one in the number of aliens passing through this country; both these tendencies being, doubtless, encouraged by the activity of trade here and in the United States and the demand for labour. The matter is one the importance of which has not been lost sight of. Legislation on the subject is surrounded with difficulties which I hope may be overcome, but I fear we shall be unable to make any proposals to the House this session. I may say that we hope the census about to be taken may clear up some matters at present obscure.

REGULATION OF SEAMEN'S LODGING HOUSES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether any, and, if so, which seaport towns besides Cardiff and Newport have adopted bye-laws regulating seamen's lodging-houses in their districts, under the powers of Section 214 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894; and, also, in what places an Order in Council, under sub-section 5 of the said section, is in force.

MR. RITCHIE: In addition to Cardiff and Newport, the following towns have adopted bye-laws for seamen's lodging-houses under the section referred to in the question:—Middlesbrough, South Shields, Liverpool, Tynemouth, and Barry and Cadoxton. Orders in Council under sub-section 5 are in force at Penarth, Barry and Cadoxton, Cardiff, and Newport.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY—READING ACCIDENT.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any communication has been addressed by the Board of Trade to the Great Western Railway Company in connection with the accident at Reading on 27th December, 1899, respecting which the inspector found that it was due to carelessness on the part of certain men, but remarked in his report men who have been for fourteen or fifteen hours on the foot plate could hardly be expected to display that unremitting vigilance which is necessary for safety; and what was the nature of the communication, whether any reply has been received from the railway company, and what was its nature.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; the report was forwarded to the company on the 20th March—that is, immediately it was issued. The Board of Trade have not heard from the company on the subject; if necessary, a further communication shall be addressed to them. The hon. Member no doubt observed that the inspecting officer himself inferred that the long hours were caused by the Christmas traffic.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM—BUCKLAND COLLECTION.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether any decision has been arrived at to remove the Buckland Collection from the South Kensington Museum, having in view the desirability of utilising it for giving national instruction in

fisheries and pisciculture; and whether there is not a sum of £5,000 left to the Buckland Museum; and, if so, in whom is it vested and to what use is it being applied.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. In regard to the second paragraph of the question, there is a sum of about £4,000 in the Chancery Division of the High Court, of which the interest is payable to Mrs. Buckland for her life, and of which the reversion was bequeathed by Mr. Buckland for the establishment of a Chair of Economic Fish Culture.

SIR MARK STEWART: Has nothing been done up to the present?

SIR J. GORST: Nothing.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Have the Department done anything to put the collection in proper order?

SIR J. GORST: I must ask for notice of that.

TOTTENHAM SCHOOL BOARD — VACCINATION REGULATIONS.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether the Education Department has declined to allow the Tottenham School Board to appoint a girl as a pupil teacher on the ground that she has not been vaccinated, although in other respects she satisfies all requirements; and, if so, will he state upon what statutory authority the Education Department professes to base its action.

SIR J. GORST: I have no information as to the particular case of the pupil teacher referred to in the question, but such a refusal would be in accordance with the practice of the department. The Committee of Council have power under Section 97 of the Education Act, 1870, to prescribe the conditions of the grant to Public Elementary Schools.

TELEGRAPH SERVICE CLASSIFICATION.

COLONEL DALBIAC (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any steps will be taken to carry out the scheme introduced by Mr. Fawcett, and recommended by the Tweedmouth Committee, with reference to the abolition of classification, whereby the many hundreds of telegraphists now only receiving £160 per annum, with no hope of advancement, will be permitted to rise to a salary of £190 per annum, which was the prospect held out to many of them when entering the service.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension regarding Mr. Fawcett's scheme and the recommendations of the Tweedmouth Committee in reference to abolition of classification. So far from recommending abolition of classification, Mr. Fawcett provided in his scheme for first and second classes of telegraphists in London with a maximum of £140 a year for the first class, which subsequently—in 1890—was raised to £160 a year. Lord Tweedmouth's Committee recommended the combination of the first and second classes, but distinctly limited amalgamation to those two classes, and expressed an opinion that the maximum salary of £160 a year affords an adequate remuneration for the work entrusted to a telegraphist in London—an opinion which was subsequently endorsed by the Postmaster General and myself. The prospect of advancement to the class of overseers and senior telegraphists which has a maximum of £190 has not been altered in any respect.

CORK POST OFFICE RELIEF DUTIES.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether there is any regular system for the distribution of relief duty at the Cork Post Office; and if so, is that system always followed in regard to the equal claims of the general body of the employees.

MR. HANBURY: Relief duty at Cork is allotted by regular system, when there are no exceptional circumstances which demand a departure from such system in the interests of the Service; and the claims of all the staff are duly considered.

TELEGRAPH STATION AT AKAHISTA, COUNTY CORK.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether a guarantee has been given for the payment of expenses in connection with a telegraph station at Akahista, County Cork; and whether, seeing that a promise of the said station has been made, will he explain what is the cause of delay in connection with it.

*MR. HANBURY: A guarantee has not been given for the establishment of a telegraph office at Akahista; and no promise of an office there has been made.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE FOR TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

MR. M'GHEE (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether London telegraph clerks are entitled to free medical attendance, and whether the official doctors' officers visit patients who cannot leave their homes; and whether the Postmaster General will take steps to make adequate provision for giving the London telegraphists free medical attendance, in accordance with the statement made in the Parliamentary Return issued on the Motion of the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow in 1898.

MR. HANBURY: There are no persons called telegraph clerks in London. The London telegraphists whose salaries are not over £160 a year are allowed free medical attendance at their offices or at their homes provided the homes are within the prescribed limit of three miles from the head office of the district in which they are employed. If they reside beyond this limit they are entitled to receive advice and medicine on application at the surgery of the medical officer.

CORK TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that there are at present three fully qualified female substitutes in the Cork Telegraph Department awaiting appointments in the office for the past six years; and will he undertake that the next vacancies will be filled by one or other of these officers.

MR. HANBURY: Yes; their claims and qualifications will be considered with those of any other eligible officers.

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS—HEATING ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in national schools in Ireland other than the model schools, any official arrangement exists for heating the schools in winter; whether the National Board have any power to secure that the schools are properly heated, and take steps to do so, and out of what fund the cost of heating is paid; and whether any distinction exists in this respect between ordinary national schools and the model schools, which are generally attended by the children of well-to-do parents; and, if so, what the reason of this distinction is.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): No arrangement such as referred to in the first paragraph exists, but the schools are supposed to be kept by the local managers in a fit state for the reception of pupils at all times of the year. The Commissioners have no power to compel the proper heating of schools other than model schools; they would, however, draw the attention of the manager to any case of serious neglect. The model schools are under the direct control and management of the board, hence the duty of heating these schools devolves upon the board.

KERRY DEPUTY SURVEYORS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he can state on what grounds the Local Government Board have ordered the Kerry County Council to increase the salaries of their deputy surveyors from £80 to £150 per year.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The reasons which induced the Local Government Board to increase the salary of the county surveyor for Kerry, and which were explained by me in answer to the hon. Member's question of Friday last, are equally applicable to the cases of the assistant surveyors, whose salaries have also been increased by the Board as stated.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the county council heard the evidence of these gentlemen and came to the conclusion there was no necessity to increase their salaries, as there was no increase of work? On what ground, therefore, did the Local Government Board, without consulting the county council, increase the salaries by 100 per cent?

MR. ATKINSON: The Local Government Board disagreed with the decision come to by the county council.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the duties have actually decreased?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot proceed to argue the question.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Chief Secretary stated in this House this session that the county councils would be consulted in these matters?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is arguing the question.

DEATH OF CONSTABLE MURPHY AT LURGAN.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the death of Constable Francis Murphy, R.I.C. in the workhouse hospital at Lurgan about a week ago; whether, and on what dates, the constable was transferred from the town of Moira and thereto from Mayo Bridge; by whose directions was he removed to the hospital, and how many hours he lived after his admission to the hospital; whether he is aware that Constable Murphy frequently complained of want of medical attention while in Moira; and whether he is aware that, in the absence of an inquest as to the cause of death, and the circumstances in connection therewith, grave dissatisfaction exists among the people and the friends of deceased, and whether a Local Government Board inquiry will be held into the matter.

MR. ATKINSON: My attention has been directed to the circumstances attending the death of this constable. He arrived at Moira, on transfer from Mayo Bridge, on the 15th February. He was exempted from duty on the 17th February, and between that date and the 10th instant, when he died, he was visited six times by the constabulary medical attendant. The constable made no complaints, nor had he any reason for doing so, as the medical attendant was very attentive to him. Up to the time of his removal to the workhouse hospital the deceased walked about the barrack grounds. He died five hours after his admission to the workhouse hospital on the 10th instant. He had previously expressed himself gratified at having been removed to the hospital. The man died from natural causes, collapse through heart disease accelerated by pneumonia and long-standing bronchial attacks. The case does no call for the interference of the Local Government Board, whose functions in the matter relate only to the treatment of the deceased in the workhouse hospital, and I see no reason for directing the Inspector General to hold an inquiry.

CARRICKMACROSS WORKHOUSE.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Agnew, Local Government Board inspector, recently made an inspection of Carrickmacross workhouse between eight and ten o'clock at night; whether he is aware that this inspector has been in the habit of making an inspection of workhouses in several other places in Ulster at night; and whether he will order the discontinuance of this practice of disturbing the inmates after they have retired for the night.

MR. ATKINSON: I am informed that Mr. Agnew recently visited a couple of the wards of this workhouse between the hours mentioned, but that his visit did not extend to the whole of the establishment. He is not in the habit of making such visits at night, though he has done so occasionally, and the Local Government Board see no reason for interfering with the discretion vested in their inspector in this respect, and, on the contrary, are of opinion that occasional inspection of some of the wards at night is most desirable.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

MR. CAREW (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has any objection to grant the Return as to officers under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, which stands on the Paper for this day.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I do not think a Return such as is suggested would be of sufficient importance to lay on the Table. If, however, the hon. Member wishes to see a list of the names of the officers referred to, with their emoluments, I shall be happy to show it to him.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. CAREW: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the County Wicklow County Council, at the suggestion of its secretary, adopted a resolution on 27th February, 1900, directing the secretary to inform the clerks of the several rural district councils that by order of the county council the forms of notice of motion, tender and contractor's bond, as also forms 11, 12, 13, and 14, prescribed by the District Accounts Order, 1899, have been prepared and are supplied free on application to the secretary's office, and that the council will not in future entertain proposals from rural district councils unless made on the forms so provided, etc.; whether a county council can compel a district council to accept forms supplied at higher cost to the ratepayers than the district council itself can procure by contract; and whether it has any power to refuse to accept forms sent up by the district council which are in accordance with the rules laid down by the Local Government Board, merely because they are not the forms supplied by a particular printer.

MR. ATKINSON: A resolution to the effect stated in the question was adopted by the Wicklow County Council at their meeting on the 27th ultimo. The direction given would appear to be for the purpose of obtaining uniformity in such matters and does not, in the opinion of the Local Government Board, call for any interference on their part. The answer to the second and third paragraphs is in the negative.

BELFAST WORKHOUSE CEMETERY.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the crowded state of the cemetery in connection with the Belfast Union workhouse; and whether he will recommend that additional accommodation for the interment of paupers should be provided elsewhere.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The Local Government Board will suggest to the guardians the propriety of acquiring additional ground for a cemetery.

TOWN HOLDINGS—SUGGESTED COMMISSION.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether the Government will appoint a Commission to continue, complete, and issue a Report upon the tenure and security of improvements to tenants of town holdings in Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. ATKINSON: This question is obviously one that should be addressed to my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

LAND COMMISSION SITTINGS AT KANTURK.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he can say what was the last date upon which the Assistant Land Commissioners sat in Kanturk, County Cork; is he aware that upon that occasion not more than half of the cases listed were disposed of; and in view of this fact and of the number of additional applications to fix a fair rent, whether the Land Commission will arrange for an early sitting in Kanturk.

MR. ATKINSON: A Sub-Commission last sat in Kanturk in November, 1899. All the cases entered on the list for hearing before this Sub-Commission have been disposed of. There are only sixteen cases from the Kanturk district not yet listed for hearing. A further sitting of a Sub-Commission will be held at as early a date as practicable.

ANNALY ESTATE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ire-

land whether he is aware that six tenants, who made applications to purchase their holdings on the Annaly (Rathclure) Estate, were induced by the receiver to sign agreements to have their fair rents fixed by the land valuers; and why it is that their holdings have neither been visited nor their rents so fixed, and will he cause inquiry to be made as to the cause of the delay.

MR. ATKINSON: I understand that a number of tenants from this estate agreed to refer their cases to court valuers to report as to the fair rents of the holdings, that the holdings were duly inspected, and that the rents have long since been fixed in these cases. There are no other cases of this nature, so I am told, at present pending on the estate. If the hon. Member will supply me with the names of the six tenants referred to in the question, together with the names of the town lands upon which their holdings are situate, I will call for a further report in the matter.

BALTIMORE RAILWAY EXTENSION.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether, in view of the importance of Baltimore as a fishing station, and also of the promises made by the Congested Districts Board and the Treasury to contribute towards the cost of the railway extension at Baltimore to deep water, immediate steps will be taken to have this work carried out.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, N.): The Congested Districts Board some years ago offered to contribute towards the cost of the construction of a pier at Baltimore on terms which were communicated to the railway company. The railway company, however, have not agreed to the terms of the offer, which has in consequence been withdrawn.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to ascertain the views of the Baltimore Harbour Board?

MR. PLUNKETT: Yes, Sir.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, DUBLIN.

MR. LECKY (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland if the Estimates of 1900-1901 contain any provision for the clearing of the site of the new Royal College of Science in Dublin, this site having been purchased last year in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee appointed to inquire into the question: and, if not, if it is too late to make such provision.

MR. PLUNKETT: No such provision has been made. The site in question is occupied by four houses which will mostly be occupied by the new Department. Nothing would be gained, and something would be lost, by clearing the site until the scheme for the reformed college has been settled in its main lines, firstly as regards the subjects to be taught, and secondly as regards the buildings required for teaching those subjects. But the Committee which is to report as to the subjects and the building has been appointed and will hold its first meeting shortly after Easter.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): With reference to public business on Thursday I beg to ask whether the First Lord of the Treasury is aware that on that night a most important motion is on the Paper with reference to the new Education Code, and whether he can make arrangements to allow that motion to come on, say, at 10 o'clock.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the force of the right hon. Gentleman's appeal. I have not had the opportunity of making myself acquainted with the amount or the importance of the discussion which is likely to arise on the motion to which he refers, but I have no reason to believe that it will take very long. If the right hon. Gentleman assures me to the contrary, I will do what I can to meet the wishes of hon. Members opposite. I think, however, that on Thursday we ought to pass not only the reference to the Committee on Municipal Trading, but the Railway Accidents Bill. If those orders are passed I will not ask the House to go on with other Bills after 10 o'clock.

MR. DILLON: When will the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill be taken? I may say I wish to move an important In-

struction to the Committee. The Tithe Rent-charge (Ireland) Bill is put down for April 26th—a most inconvenient day for the Irish Members after the Easter recess, and I hope we shall have an assurance that it will not be taken that day.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Before I answer that question may I, referring again to Thursday's business, say it would be useless to stop Government business if the only result is to allow the Bills of private Members to come on. If it is a matter of general agreement that if the Government stop their business at 10 o'clock no attempt will be made to take private Bills on the Paper for Thursday next, then I will make the arrangement. I cannot give a pledge not to take the Irish Charitable Loans Bill on Thursday if there is a good chance, but if it is inconvenient for hon. Gentlemen to discuss the Tithe Rent-charge Bill on the date mentioned, I will engage not to take it on that day.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Cannot the Government put the Code debate immediately after the Railway Accidents Bill on the Orders of the Day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider that point.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

James Farquharson Remnant, Esq., for the Borough of Finsbury (Holborn Division).

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL.

WOLVERHAMPTON, ESSINGTON, AND CANNOCK CHASE JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill.

Census (Great Britain) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for supplying with water the borough of Higham Ferrers, and certain parishes and places adjacent thereto, in the county of Northampton." Higham Ferrers Water Bill [Lords].

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL [H.L.].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NEW BILLS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): In asking leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893, I may briefly explain that it embodies some small amendments which the experience of administration has proved to be necessary in the various Education Acts. Without going through each clause in detail I may say that there is, for instance, an amendment as to the fee grant, providing that the average attendance shall be calculated according to the Code at the time being in force, instead of according to the Code of 1891. Powers are given to guardians to contribute to the expenses of public elementary schools in those cases where the poor law children are to any extent sent to those schools. There is a provision to relieve the parishes in the jurisdiction of the School Board from contributing, as they do now, twice over towards the blind and deaf children in their districts, and in the matter of compulsory attendance the maximum penalty is raised from 5s. to 20s. Finally, there is another important amendment raising the number of attendances for obtaining what is known as the dunces' certificate from 250 to 350; and there is a section empowering the local authorities to make bye-laws affecting the school attendance of children up to the age of fourteen instead of thirteen.

Bill to amend the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Gorst and Mr. Attorney General.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL.

"To amend the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time

upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 142.]

BURIAL GROUNDS BILL

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (SIR M WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have to ask leave to bring in a Bill to amend the law relating to burial grounds. It carries out the recommendations of the Committee which in 1898 sat upon the Burial Acts, under the chairmanship of my hon. friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, and which came to a substantially fair agreement on the points which for years had been engaging the attention of the House. I think it would be a great pity if this House did not take the opportunity of endeavouring to settle some of these questions at any rate. During the autumn I had the honour of receiving a deputation composed of what I may call the contending parties, and they were entirely at one in urging the Government to introduce a Bill based on the recommendations of the Committee, and assuring me if it were introduced it would be approached by them with a desire to bring about an amicable settlement. I have therefore to ask leave to introduce this Bill. It does not, as I told the deputation, propose to consolidate or amend the whole law. That would be a rather too ambitious attempt on my part, but I hope it will go a considerable way towards it. Dealing with the two separate parts into which the Burial Acts may be divided, it leaves the whole ecclesiastical side to the Home Office, and the whole sanitary and financial part to the Local Government Board. It is hoped that by that means the present conflict of authority and confusion of interest may be avoided. Substantially, the whole of the recommendations of the Select Committee, with the exception of two or three points which appear to be outside the general tenor of the Report, are embodied in the Bill.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Burial Grounds, ordered to be brought in by Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley and Mr. Jesse Collings.

BURIAL GROUNDS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Burial Grounds," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143.]

SEA FISHERIES BILL.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I have to ask leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Acts relating to sea fisheries. I may explain that the Bill is one which has been before the House under another designation, which was open to considerable criticism. I think the present title is more appropriate. The object is to prevent the present destruction of small and immature fish, which, according to the Report of the Sea Fisheries Committees, can be used for no other purpose except that of manure. This object the Bill proposes to effect by prohibiting the sale of such fish, in accordance not only with the representation of the Fishmongers' Company, but with the recommendation of a Select Committee of the House of Commons. A law of this kind is in existence in nearly all the great European countries, and I am satisfied that if the supply of a very valuable food for the people is to be increased, it is necessary to follow the example of Continental Legislatures by limiting the size of fish that may be sold. At the same time it will put a stop to operations which are causing much injury to the various fisheries.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): Will the Bill apply to Ireland?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes.

Question proposed, that the Bill be now read a first time.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): Does the Bill propose to place any restriction on the operations of trawlers within a certain distance of our coasts?

MR. RITCHIE: No, except so far as it prevents them selling fish below a certain size.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I only want to put a question.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Berwickshire has already spoken since the question was put. Further questions are very apt to develop into debate.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Is it not allowable to ask a question?

*MR. SPEAKER: Only, as the hon. Member for Cork did, while the right hon. Gentleman introducing the Bill sat down.

Bill to amend the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley.

SEA FISHERIES BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 144.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): The object of the Amendment which I have put upon the Paper, and which I now move, is to exempt Ireland from the reimposition of the tea duty. In the first instance, the history of this tea duty in Ireland is rather interesting. Before 1817 the tea duty in Ireland was, compared with that of England, very small indeed. As well as my recollection serves me, it was four or five times as large in England as in Ireland, but in 1817, as part of the scheme of robbing Ireland, as we believe, this tax was equalised in the two countries. In 1890 the tax was reduced to 4d., and now it is proposed to increase the existing taxation 50 per cent., and raise it to 6d. As well as we can estimate, the additional amount raised from Ireland will be £250,000. The production from this tax in the year ending 31st March, 1899, in Ireland was £564,000, and therefore it is a fair estimate to say that the amount produced in Ireland from this addition to the taxation on tea may be about £250,000. I am glad to have an opportunity of very briefly alluding to one or two matters raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the debate upon this Irish financial question the other night. At the close of the debate, and without any warning or notice whatever, he put forward a number of entirely new statements and quoted a number of figures which, on the spur of the moment, it was impossible for us on these benches without examination and inquiry to deal with. On this question the right hon. Gentleman laid it down that the English consumption was 5¼lb. per head of the population, producing a tax of 1s. 9d., and that the Irish consumption was 6½ lb. per head, producing 2s. 2d.* That is to say, that, taking the case of an Irish family, say, of six persons, the amount paid under the old tax would be 13s., and now, under this proposal, that tax is to be raised on the Irish family to 19s. 6d. The right hon. Gentleman laid down, I think, an extraordinary proposition when he argued that the larger consumption of tea in Ireland was, forsooth, something in the nature of an argument in favour of Irish prosperity and Irish ability to pay the tax. The large consumption of tea in Ireland is a proof of the poverty of the people instead of a proof of their prosperity. It is the very cheapest drink they can obtain—something like 2d. a gallon—and it is probably the cheapest food upon which any human being can maintain life. It does seem to me that the argument is entirely the other way, and that the large consumption of tea in Ireland is a proof of the poverty and not the prosperity of the people, and of their inability rather than their ability to bear this additional impost. The right hon. Gentleman laid down and elaborated the principle which underlies really the whole or a very large part of the financial injustice under which Ireland suffers, when he propounded the old doctrine that identity of impost is the same as identity of burden. That was the fallacy underlying Mr. Gladstone's policy in 1853. It is the policy which underlies the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day. In his speech he declared that anything in the nature of differential taxation of the same articles as between England and Ireland was a principle which could never be accepted. He went on to say—

"That is a demand on the part of Ireland to occupy the position and to exercise the power of a governing part of this great Empire, and

* See page 123 of this Volume.

right hon. Gentleman would lead the House to believe from his argument that the assent of Ireland to this arrangement in 1816 was an essential condition of the contract. If it was, we have a right to withdraw from the contract now, when we find that it is unjust and oppressive. The Chancellor of the Exchequer complained that this was an attempt of the Irish people to fix the taxation on Great Britain. He denounced that as a ridiculous and unjust thing. But what is he doing? He is allowing Great Britain to fix the taxation of Ireland. If one is unjust, I contend the other is equally so. Let me say one word in continuation of this point. What has been the result of this imposition of identical taxation upon Ireland? It has been absolutely ruinous. I never heard a more superficial and unsatisfactory speech than was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman upon this point. He attempted, forsooth, to prove that Ireland is to-day rapidly increasing in prosperity and wealth, when it is common knowledge that by comparison with any other nation in the world, Ireland has been retrograding instead of advancing. The right hon. Gentleman alluded with pride and satisfaction to the fact that emigration from Ireland was diminishing. Yes, thank God, it is. The emigration cannot go on for ever at the rate it has been going on for many decades past. Naturally it must, to some extent, diminish in volume, because the population left in the country has diminished by one half. But even this consolation the right hon. Gentleman is not entitled to. He quoted the emigration figures for 1898, and pointed to the fact that only 32,000 had emigrated in that year. He did not give the figures for 1899, which show an increase of emigration from 32,000 to 42,000. So that even upon that point the right hon. Gentleman's figures were misleading and inadequate. In talking of this question of depopulation, he alluded to some rural parts of England in which he knew the agricultural population was diminishing. Did he really put that forward as a reasonable argument? We are not talking about the depopulation of any particular district in Ireland. We are talking of the depopulation of the country taken as a whole. The country taken as a whole shows a terribly diminishing population, and to say because in England, where the population is increasing from year to year by leaps and bounds, there

may be a particular rural district the population of which is diminishing, that that is any answer, is really unworthy as an argument of the right hon. Gentleman. He spoke also of the receipts from railway traffic ——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must be aware that the rules of the House preclude references to previous debates in the same session. The hon. Member must also understand that in strictness he is bound by the limits of the present Amendment to the position of Great Britain and Ireland with regard to the increase of the tea duty.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: To take the second point first, I am arguing that this additional impost upon tea should not be put upon Ireland, because of the poverty of her people which makes them unable to bear it. With regard to the other point, I will not further allude to the right hon. Gentleman, but I will say that a distinguished financier has recently made these statements. A distinguished gentleman recently stated that the railway receipts in Ireland had increased by 25 per cent. in ten years.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I rise to order. What on earth has this to do with the tea duty?

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. Gentleman to evade my ruling by so transparent an artifice.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I do not understand. The point put to you, Sir, as a point of order, is, whether I am entitled to discuss the question of the receipts for railway rates. On that point I would submit to you that anything which shows the inability of Ireland to bear taxation is a relevant argument on the proposal to increase her taxation.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is entitled to argue the general poverty of the resources of Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Then, Sir, if anyone says that these receipts from railway traffic have increased in the last ten years by 25 per cent., I should call attention to the fact that mileage has increased by 12½ per cent., and that the rate of increase per mile has in ten years been only 4 per cent.—a smaller increase than will be found in any other country in Europe or in the world. Take the case of joint-stock companies in Ireland. It is said as a proof of the prosperity of Ireland that they have doubled in number in the last ten years, but it is left out of account altogether that included in that category are those innumerable co-operative societies which have been established in Ireland, the establishment of which, though they may be most useful in their way, cannot be regarded as in themselves a proof of the increased prosperity of the people. Savings bank deposits have been alluded to as a proof of increased prosperity and of Ireland's ability to bear taxation. Savings bank deposits show in ten years an increase of 4¼ millions, but in the same ten years there has been a decrease of 6½ millions in Government funds and Indian stocks, so that if you take the question of the prosperity of the country as a whole, the decrease in this kind of investments may be set against the increase with regard to savings banks. I content myself with this general statement: that the picture which was recently put before this House and the country of Ireland as a rapidly improving and prosperous country is a grossly exaggerated one, and by every test which the ingenuity of man may suggest Ireland is unable to bear this additional taxation which is proposed. This Budget, even if it were a fair one for Great Britain, is a glaringly unfair one for Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has defended this Budget on the ground that he is raising £8,000,000 from direct taxation and only £6,000,000 from indirect. This is 57 per cent. from direct and 43 per cent. from indirect taxation. I admit candidly that for a War Budget that is a very plausible statement to be able to make. If the right hon. Gentleman has to provide a War Budget, then I think the proportion of direct to indirect taxation which he lays down is a reasonable one. But so far as the application of this Budget to Ireland is concerned, that statement is an absolute and complete misrepresentation. In Ireland the application of the Budget will work out in this way. The direct taxation raised will be only 33 per cent. of the whole, and the indirect taxation will be 67 per cent. of the whole. I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to

get accurate figures and accurate estimates. The income tax produced in Ireland last year £704,000. It is proposed to increase it by 50 per cent., producing £300,000. The tea duty produced last year £564,000; the increase of 50 per cent. will be £250,000. Tobacco produced £1,201,000, and the increase of 12½ per cent. will produce £150,000. Beer produced £773,000; an increase of 15 per cent. gives £100,000, and an increase of 5 per cent. on spirits gives £100,000 more, making in all about £900,000 as a result of this increased budget upon Ireland. These figures, if they are correct, show that Ireland will be paying £300,000, or 33 per cent., of direct taxation, and £600,000, or 67 per cent. of indirect taxation, whereas in Great Britain the proportions are reversed, and Great Britain will be paying only 43 per cent., of indirect and 57 per cent. of direct. So that the main argument upon which the right hon. Gentleman defended this Budget, namely, that there was a fair and equitable distinction between the amount to be borne by indirect and direct taxation, falls to the ground altogether when you apply it to the case of Ireland. It seems to me that in itself is a strong argument why this increase of the duty on tea should be omitted. I would suggest what would be a fair thing for him to do. Why cannot Ireland be treated the same as Great Britain in this Budget? Why cannot the right hon. Gentleman be content to raise only the same proportion of direct and indirect taxation that he is raising in Great Britain? If he would be content to do that, he would to some extent at any rate mitigate the injustice which I think he is perpetrating on the country. If he did that, he could do it by levying direct taxation in Ireland as it is under his proposal at £300,000, and by keeping only the beer and spirit duties—£200,000 more—and confining his demand upon Ireland to these three items. Then the taxation upon Ireland would fall in exactly the same proportion as he proposes it should fall upon England, and he would in that way save Ireland from the imposition on her poor people of this harsh additional tax on tea and on tobacco. Of course we take the position that we object to pay a single penny of additional taxation, for the double reason that we think we are overtaxed already, and that we object to the object to which the money is to be devoted. Of course, we know as practical politicians we cannot defeat this Budget. We are powerless to do so. All we are able to do is to register our protest in the division lobby. If we, as practical men, can get any alleviation for Ireland, I think we ought to do our best, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do what I think is a reasonable thing, let the taxation direct and indirect fall in the same proportion as in England, that will be a relief to our country. It will diminish the total amount of the additional taxation, and it will remove to some extent the sense of injustice under which we suffer. For these reasons, I beg to move this Amendment, and I invite the serious and sympathetic attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Amendment proposed—

"On page 1, line 16, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.'"—[*Mr John Redmond.*]

Question proposed—"That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that having no special knowledge in matters of finance he should not have intervened in the debate except for the fact that the increase on the duty upon tea very greatly affected a large number of the inhabitants of Donegal, to whom tea was not so much a luxury as an actual article of food. The class of people whom he represented were the poorest in the world. In this question of finance he noticed one of the most cruel instances of the injustice which was done to Ireland by the Government, as was shown by the fact that the whole of the Irish representatives were voting against the extra taxation of their own country, and being out-voted by the majority of the House, who would not have to pay the tax which they were imposing. With regard to the way in which it affected his constituency, he drew attention to the fact that in 1896 a Committee sat to consider the incidence of taxation between the two countries, and in the Majority Report, which was signed by Mr. Childers, one of the greatest financial authorities of his day, it was stated that the same system of taxation falling on the two countries had the effect of making Ireland contribute about £2,500,000 in excess of what she

ought to contribute. The Report pointed out that if the wealth per head of one country was much less than that of the other, the tax upon taxable articles would fall very heavily upon the poorer country of the two. The main cause of the inequality of taxation between Great Britain and Ireland might be said to be tea, tobacco, and spirits, which were all heavily taxed, and the consumption of which in Ireland was equal to the consumption in Great Britain, except in the case of tea, which was consumed to a larger extent in Ireland than here, and in the case of all these articles, while the tax remained the same in both countries, the wealth with which to purchase them was less in Ireland than in Great Britain. To refer to the effect of the tea duty in Donegal, he called attention to the fact that Mr. O'Donnell gave evidence before the Commission, and he insisted strongly on the fact that tea was the food of the Donegal peasant, and that it was cruel to exact a large duty in regard to it. His evidence showed that there was a large increase in the consumption of tea even in the congested districts, and that it was not unusual for the peasants to have tea and bread at two out of their three daily meals. How could the Chancellor of the Exchequer tax those unfortunate people by an additional twopence a pound on tea? They had heard a good deal about the scarcity of milk in Kimberley during the siege, but the peasants of Ireland could not get milk because it had to be sold for the benefit of the landlord. The evidence proved that the poor people of Ireland did not have meat more than two or three times a year, while in Great Britain the great mass of the population habitually consumed butcher's meat, and even in Scotland the food of the poor was much superior to what it was in Ireland. Those poor peasants were the persons who were to be the victims of the extra taxes in order to support the stockjobbers in the City. Tea was absolutely vital to the very existence of the poor in Ireland, and Dr. O'Donnell was not the only person who bore testimony to this fact. Sir Edward Hamilton was examined by Mr. Sexton, and he was asked, if Irishmen were unable to indulge in luxuries which paid no taxes such as beef and bacon, and had to resort to tea and dry bread, how could that be proof of the taxable capacity of Irishmen, and he replied that he hardly thought that tea was a substitute for beef or bacon, and that although he would not say that tea and alcoholic drinks were luxuries yet they were rather expensive tastes in which Irishmen indulged. With what heart could men who in the whole course of a long life never knew what it was to be hungry, increase the burdens on those poor people who were in a chronic state of want—a condition, too, which was the direct result of English misgovernment? To gentlemen in easy circumstances of life it was, he knew, very difficult to realise that one shilling, sixpence, or even one penny made a vast difference with these poor peasants. An increase of twopence in one pound of tea was of far more consequence than £10,000 to many Gentlemen on the other side of the House. They were taxing these peasants with a high hand as much against their wishes as if all the Irishmen were expelled from the House. To talk of the grievances of the money-grubbing Uitlanders in the Transvaal in the same breath when they were imposing this additional taxation on the poor Irish peasants was cruel hypocrisy. He never spoke in a debate of this kind without recollecting reading of the historic scenes when Daniel O'Connell — who was praised now so much for his moderation and loyalty — made his last speech in the House. By the courtesy of the House he was permitted in his weakness to address the House from the seat on the Treasury Bench where the Chancellor of the Exchequer was now sitting, and, in accents nearly inaudible, he said, on the eve of the famine, that he was asking for bread for his people. And now the Government, whose members never knew what want was, had the face to prey on the vitals of the Irish poor to pay for a vile and infamous war.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said it had been proved to demonstration that tea was a necessity of the Irish people. It could not be called an expensive taste or, least of all, a luxury. If there was one axiom in regard to general taxation more than another conceded by all authorities, it was that, as far as possible, the indirect taxation on commodities which were necessaries of life should be reduced, and on the other hand that direct taxation on property and wealth should be increased, so far as consistent with justice. That principle was grossly violated in

the present Budget, and, in regard to Ireland, violated in the most unconscionable manner. It had been proved that the increase of 2d. in the lb. on the tea duty would amount in Ireland to £250,000, which was a startling sum to levy from the very poorest of the poor. If tea was a necessary to the poor washerwoman and the factory hand in this country, it was an article of still greater necessity to a much larger proportion of the population of Ireland at the present moment. Milk was scarcer in Ireland than in London, because the great portion of it was exported or converted into butter, and the consumption of tea was therefore cheaper than milk, and it had become the staple food of the people eked out with potatoes and Indian meal. It was said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the enormous consumption of tea in Ireland was a proof of the prosperity of the country; but he had never heard a more fallacious argument from an intelligent statesman. Instead of that, it was a proof directly the other way—that the poor people had been driven to the use of tea as a substitute for other things. If they could eat their own bacon, or beef, or mutton, as the prosperous working classes in Great Britain did, tea would not form such a large item in the expenditure of the households of Ireland. Sir Edward Hamilton had furnished some figures to the Royal Commission as to taxation from 1819 to 1894; and these figures had been scrutinised by Treasury experts, who could not be accused of sympathy with Irish views on the matter. These figures proved that the indirect taxation on commodities had increased from about 11s. per head of the population in 1819 to something like £1 2s. at the present day; whereas there was an enormous decrease during the same period in the taxation levied on commodities in Great Britain. How could they with any justice or sense of fair play ask an increase of 100 per cent. on the indirect taxation of the poor people of Ireland? It might be said that if they were not to impose the tea duty in Ireland they would have to establish a Customs barrier between the two countries. Well, why not? That was, one of the things Irish Members were contending for. Their complaint was, when the old Customs regulations were abolished in the twenties, Ireland was deprived of the great part of the trade between Great Britain and Ireland. They could not at present tell whether Irish exports were or were not progressing. The argument might be used that the abolition of the duty on tea in Ireland would involve a separate Irish Custom House or department, but at present Customs officers in Ireland were underworked, their duties were light, and their hours were short, and there ought to be no difficulty whatever in the way of establishing regulations which would permit of a higher duty on tea in Great Britain than in Ireland. He thought an unanswerable case had been made out as regarded that aspect of the case. If there were one thing more striking than another in the Budget it was that the present time should have been selected in order to increase the duty on tea. Not long ago one of the great principles of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to give a free breakfast table; instead of that he now proposed to increase its cost. But, of course, they could not have their cake and eat it—they could not go to war and expect not to pay for it. What had become of all the economic reformers who were so earnest for the reform of finance ten or twelve years ago? Was no protest to be raised except by the Irish Members against this system of taxation? They might naturally expect the help of their friends the Irish Unionists, who a year or two ago with commendable public spirit joined them in an endeavour to reform the financial relations. Surely they ought to come forward and join in protesting against all the increases, not least against the increase of duty on an article which was a necessary article of food to the great bulk of the Irish people.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. and learned Member for Waterford, who moved this Amendment, has paid me a very high compliment, because he occupied practically the whole of his speech not with reasons in support of the Amendment, but in replying to some observations which it was my duty to address to the House on Thursday last on the debate on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland. The hon. and learned Member did not reply on that occasion, although possibly his reply might have influenced the result of the debate, so that I can only suppose that

my statements were so difficult to answer that he postponed replying until this evening. I will not follow the hon. and learned Member for Waterford into the subject, which is indirectly connected no doubt—but only indirectly connected—with the Amendment before the Committee. The standpoint from which he and hon. Members below the gangway approach this matter is utterly different from mine. They persist in all matters of taxation in treating Ireland as a separate country. I treat it as part of the United Kingdom, and from that point of view I am utterly unable to see why the poor man in Ireland should pay less duty on tea than the poor man in either England or Scotland. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford was good enough to make a proposal to me. He said that as a result of this increased taxation Ireland would have to pay £900,000. I think it is extremely difficult to tell exactly how much will fall on Ireland, or, as I would prefer to say, on the Irish taxpayers, but that is not an unfair estimate. The hon. and learned Member says that this additional taxation is too much for Ireland, but he is good enough to offer me £300,000 from the income tax, and £200,000 from indirect taxation, reducing the contribution of Ireland to £400,000. The total additional taxation levied in the United Kingdom would then be £13,800,000, and of that Ireland would pay about one-twenty-seventh or considerably less than according even to the much quoted Report of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations her taxable capacity would enable her to pay. I do not think I need dwell on the fairness or unfairness of that proposal. The hon. Member for South Donegal said that as his constituents were exceptionally poor and excessively fond of tea the tax was exceptionally hard on them. I said on Thursday last that the amount of tea consumed in Ireland per head of the population was very considerably greater than in England and Scotland, and that that was no proof of the poverty of Ireland. That view is, I think, one that would have been accepted by the framers of the Act of Union, because it is a curious fact that among the alternatives which the framers of the Seventh Article of the Act of Union suggested to the proportion of 2 to 15 as the respective contributions of Ireland and Great Britain was a calculation based on the amount of tobacco, tea, spirits, wine, beer, and sugar consumed in the respective countries, and therefore obviously at that time they did consider that the amount of the consumption of these articles was a test of the taxable capacities of the two countries.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: They were a more meat-eating population.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I cannot agree in that opinion of the hon. Member. I did not quote the extra consumption of tea in Ireland as a proof of the prosperity of Ireland. What I said, if I remember aright, was that the fact that a greater amount of tea per head was consumed in Ireland was certainly, as far as it went, a proof that the tax upon it did not fall harder on Irishmen than on Englishmen or Scotchmen. I think that is a perfectly fair argument, to deduce from the fact to which hon. Gentlemen have referred. There is one part of this question which was not referred to by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, though it was referred to by the hon. Member for North Cork. The hon. and learned Member did not refer to the fact that if we were to have one rate of duty on tea in Great Britain and another rate in Ireland, we must have a system of custom houses between the two countries. The hon. Member for North Cork suggested that the old system of separate custom houses should be restored in order that more accurate statistics might be obtained of the commerce of Ireland. But under that system it is perfectly obvious that Ireland, as far as trade was concerned, would be a foreign country as compared with Great Britain, and that the trade between Ireland and Great Britain would have to be dealt with as a foreign trade. That we should have to establish custom houses between the two countries is not, in the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite, an objection at all. For my part I think that no more fatal proposal either for Ireland or Great Britain could be suggested. It may be felt by the poorer classes in Ireland that the addition of 2d. per lb. to the duty on tea is a serious burden, but it would be an infinitely worse thing for them to have separate custom houses.

MR. FLYNN: Why?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Because separate custom houses between the two countries were found intolerable in days when communication and trade between them were as nothing compared to what they are now. We have now all kinds of facilities by railways, steamships, and other means of communication between the two countries which did not then exist, and nothing could be more destructive of Irish commerce and industry than separate custom houses between Great Britain and Ireland. I am told, for example, there is an important establishment in Belfast, a great part of whose business is concerned in the distribution of tea in small quantities in Scotland as well as in Ireland. Separate custom houses would absolutely stop this, and really I am unable to understand the desire which some hon. Members from Ireland seem to entertain to establish what, from my point of view, would be a far worse thing for Ireland than any of the increased taxation proposed in this Budget. I think if hon. Gentlemen from Ireland object to this additional tea duty, their simpler course is to divide against the clause. Their proposal is absolutely impracticable, and would be an injury and not a benefit to Ireland.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I confess that although I am going to support this clause and this duty in the Budget proposal, I support it most unwillingly. But this is part of a war taxation, and it seems to me essential that all classes of the community should contribute towards it. It would be a very great encouragement to war if you exempted a large class of the community from all the burden of the war, and that being so it is quite plain that there would be a very large class in this country who would not pay income tax, who would not pay beer and spirit duty, and who would not pay tobacco duty. It is no doubt a misfortune, but one of the misfortunes that accompanies this war is that this tax falls upon the poorest class of the community, both in Ireland and in England. I have always recognised the fact that Ireland is a poor community. You may say of it that it is part of the same nation, but you must distinguish it as a poor community. We have poor communities of the same kind, though more scattered, in England, but you are unable to make a differential taxation for a poor community in England, or, for the same reason, for a poor community such as Ireland. But no doubt it is much more easy where you have a poor community collected as it is collected in Ireland. There are large bodies quite as poor in the metropolis and in other towns in England who would equally deserve exemption; I have stated that reasoning before, and I will not enlarge on it now. I was very much struck with the argument stated this afternoon by the hon. Member for Waterford as to the contrast between the relative incidence of direct and indirect taxation in England and in Ireland. I have always attributed great importance to the keeping up of a due proportion between direct and indirect taxation. We have been labouring in that direction and not without success in England for many years. I do not say that we have accomplished all that is to be done in that direction in England; but there is not the smallest doubt that from the character of the population of Ireland indirect taxation falls there with a much heavier proportionate weight, and if I saw any method of correcting that in Ireland I should be very much disposed to support it. But I have always felt exactly what has been stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer just now, that you could not create a differential duty on tea or any other commodity in England and in Ireland without bringing back the old customs system between the two countries. The removal of that inconvenience did not go as far back as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said. It was only removed when the English and Irish duty on spirits was finally equalised in 1858, followed by what was done by Mr. Gladstone in previous years. Therefore, down to that date there did exist a customs barrier between England and Ireland. I admit that this is a very great fiscal inconvenience, and until you can arrive at some method by which you can relieve the poorer classes of the community from the weight of indirect taxation that falls upon them as a much heavier burden, both in England and Ireland, we must seek some remedy which has not yet been proposed. Therefore, I should have been very glad if, both for the sake of the poorer classes in England and Ireland, I could have voted against the increase of the tea duty, but for the reason I have stated, this being a war tax, which must press, and which ought

to press, upon all classes of the community, I feel bound to support the proposed increase in the duty.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had stated that this was a war tax, and that the imposition of a war tax upon all classes of the community was necessary in order to inculcate upon them a proper sense of the responsibilities of war. They wanted no such stimulus in Ireland in regard to this war. They were not responsible for the war. They did not believe in it. There was an old maxim that said, "He that calls the tune must pay the piper." This was a case of making the party pay the piper who had no voice whatever in calling the tune. The right hon. Gentleman must not expect that those at any rate in that quarter of the House would regard it as any consolation for the increase of the tea duty that it was calculated to impress upon individual Irishmen a proper sense of responsibility in connection with this war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had found out a new consolation for the injustice of this tax. He told them that it was a tax not upon Ireland but upon Irishmen. That was the sum and substance of the argument upon which he had founded his refusal to recognise Ireland as a separate fiscal entity. He said that to raise this question of the fiscal separation of Ireland in this debate was to renew the question of the financial relations between the two countries. If this tax was unjust, he could hardly expect them to be reconciled to it when he told them that it was not Ireland that was being unjustly taxed, but that it was individual Irishmen who had the burden to bear. He could wish no worse fate to the Unionists in that House than that they should be compelled to acknowledge that they could not maintain the Union except in the manner in which this tax had been inflicted upon Ireland. That was what the right hon. Gentleman's argument came to on this point. He said that as long as Ireland was a portion of the Empire they could not differentiate England and Ireland in this matter. It had been demonstrated that this, amongst other incidents of their fiscal system, was unjust to Ireland. It certainly would not in the least reconcile them to that state of things to be told that injustice was a necessary incident of the relations between the two countries. On the contrary, they believed that this fiscal injustice which was inflicted upon them was one of the strongest reasons for impressing upon the House and the country the demand they had made in regard to the relations existing between the two countries both in point of finance and in point of legislation. He did not quite understand what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in respect to the question raised by the hon. Member for Waterford. The hon. Member for Waterford took occasion, as was inevitable, to reply to some observations which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made in a previous debate. Whatever the rules of the House might be, it was almost impossible to debate the question raised by this Amendment, without referring to topics dealt with by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other night. He did not understand whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer that night did or did not continue to maintain the view that the increased consumption of tea in Ireland, and the increased proportion in which tea was consumed in Ireland as compared with England was a proof that Ireland had become more prosperous, and was not in a position to refuse to pay the tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the makers of the union would have recognised that argument, and he said that one of the alternatives proposed by the authors of the Act of Union was to take a number of articles and estimate the relative consumption of those articles in the two countries, and base the fiscal system on the relative consumption. The hon. Member could understand that that would be a fair and proper method of calculating taxation, because it would take a very large number of different articles, or at any rate more than one, and the fallacy——

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: All these articles were subjects of taxation previous to the present Budget.

MR. MAURICE HEALY said the right hon. Gentleman did not appreciate the point he was making. He was demonstrating the fact that the consumption of tea in Ireland had increased, and that its consumption in Ireland was relatively greater than the consumption in Great Britain. He believed it was a fact that the consumption of tea had increased

in Ireland. Perhaps it was also true that the increase in the consumption of tea had been coincident with somewhat increased prosperity amongst the labouring class in Ireland, but he did not think there had been any increase in the rate of wages amongst the labouring class in Ireland if they took the last twenty years. If they took the last fifty years there had been a substantial increase in the rate at which the labouring class had been paid, but was it just to connect these two phenomena—the increase in wages within the last fifty years, and the increase in the consumption of tea—and argue that the one was the result of the other? The fact was quite the opposite. The increased consumption of tea by the Irish labourer indicated a worse condition of the people. It meant a transition from a healthy diet to an unhealthy diet. Now the food of the Irish labourer was very largely bread and tea. Could anyone argue that this state of things represented an improvement in diet. Any doctor, and any man who had studied the subject of diet, would say that a diet of potatoes and milk aided by meal was a far more healthy diet than a diet of white bread supplemented by tea. The past fifty years had seen an entire change in the conditions of local life. Increased facilities of transit enabled farmers to get much better prices for milk, eggs and butter. As long as the farmer was not able to get these better prices, milk was a common article of diet with the labouring people, but that was no longer the case. The same might be said with regard to eggs and butter. The general diet now was bread and tea, and that could only result in the deterioration of the mental and physical capacities of the Irish labouring population. Tea was the vulnerable point of the Budget. Less could be said in favour of this tax than of any other which it was proposed to increase, and if the Budget in this particular was unjust and mischievous to the poorer classes in England, it was much more so when it came to be applied to the poorer classes in Ireland. No one could read the evidence given before the Financial Relations Commission without being struck by the enormous proportion of the population of Ireland who lived in a condition of abject poverty such as was not known in England. Tea entered into the domestic life in Ireland to a degree not at all equalled in any other part of the United Kingdom. It might be argued that if the people abstained from drinking tea or whisky they would be relieved of these taxes, and it might be better for them, but these financial questions had to be argued with regard not to the moral results produced by the taxes, but to the fiscal effects. This increased tea duty would further impoverish the people of Ireland, especially the poorer classes. The Irish Nationalist representatives would never regard as a reason for not protesting against such a tax, the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not redress the injustice without changing his fiscal system, or without ceasing to regard Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom. If such an injustice as that against which he was protesting could be remedied only by granting Ireland Home Rule, or by establishing a separate Customs House, that was the strongest possible reason why those demands should emanate from the Irish Members. For the reasons he had given, he should heartily support the mover of this Amendment.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) could not see, judging from the position taken up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the people of Ireland need expect any redress from the present Government of the financial injustice under which they suffered. England had enormously increased in wealth and population, while Ireland had greatly diminished in those respects, and yet they were to be treated on exactly the same basis as when a different state of things obtained. Any taxation which aggravated the wretched condition of the Irish people was an evil and a crime. No juggling with figures could convince anybody who knew Ireland that the people were not miserably poor. The number of paupers in the workhouses and of lunatics in the asylums was increasing in an enormous degree year by year, and he believed that the lunacy was largely attributable to the wretchedness of the diet. The physique of the Irish people was suffering from the same cause, combined with emigration. The best of the bone and sinew of the country went to other lands, leaving behind the weaker and unhealthy members of the community. The Chancellor of the Exchequer apparently pinned his faith to the doctrine that the present system of indirect taxation was fair to the people

of Ireland, but it was admitted by most students of political economy that identity of taxation did not imply equality of burden; and that was one of the points of view from which this question should be considered. Where there were two countries in which the habits and tastes of the respective peoples were altogether different, it was very difficult for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to sit down and select articles on which to impose taxation which should be felt equally in both countries. When the union between England and Ireland was discussed——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must confine his remarks to the tea duty.

MR. DOOGAN said he wanted to explain how difficult it was for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to find articles common to both countries, upon which the same tax could equitably be imposed. In Ireland, tea as an article of cheap diet has become a necessity to the bulk of the people, and more of it per head is consumed than in England. The poor of Ireland mainly subsist on tea and bread; they very rarely indeed are able to procure animal food. Hence the poor of Ireland will be harder hit by this war tax on tea than the people of Great Britain. Was it not an irony of fate that the people of Ireland, who opposed this war as being unnecessary and unjust, should be more heavily taxed than the rest of the United Kingdom in order to contribute towards its enormous expenditure? He protested against the proposed extra tax upon tea, and heartily supported the Amendment of his hon. friend.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): No doubt it is true that the proportion of indirect to direct taxation, to a certain extent, has been altered by this particular Clause in the Bill. I have taken very great interest in these forms of taxation, and I have always felt that the true policy should be to readjust them equally, and that we have done now for several years. It is true that this Budget alters that, more especially in the poorer districts, where the increased taxation falls more heavily upon the poor than upon the rich, although it is, to some extent, counterbalanced by other duties. But this is quite as true in the poorer districts of England, and in many parts of my own constituency and other places the change which this Budget involves does largely increase the relative proportion paid by indirect to direct taxation. Where the poor live very largely upon certain articles which are heavily taxed, and where they consume alcohol and spirits, any alteration of the taxes upon those articles must largely affect the relative proportion of those two items of taxation; and although my right hon. friend says we have adjusted it by the large increase in the income tax, still that does not affect the poor in any way. But the fact remains that nobody can suggest any possible scheme which would do away altogether with this anomaly; and so long as that is the case no one can claim that in order to get an accurate tax all round we should do away with this taxation upon alcohol. We should keep our eyes most carefully upon the relative proportions of direct and indirect taxation, because any increase of indirect taxation is a great hardship on the poor. The present Budget is fair because it tends to make every class pay their share towards this war. Although the people do not like to pay taxation, it would be very unwise if, after having indulged in a war, we allowed any section of the community to avoid any part in the payment for that war.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said that all classes of the community should be called upon to defray some portion of the cost of this war, and that all classes were ready if not anxious to do so. As far as the Irish people are concerned that statement has no foundation. We are not anxious to contribute one shilling towards the cost of this war, which we regard as iniquitous and unjust, and we think it is an intolerable grievance that Irish taxpayers should be called upon to pay for it. But if Ireland is to be taxed for this war and further bled, why, in the name of all that is humane and reasonable, do you not endeavour to raise your taxes in Ireland in some way which will not fall heavily upon the very poorest class of people in the country? It would be quite out of order to allude at any length to the proposed taxation in this Bill upon spirits and beer. I do not propose to do so until the proper time comes. But whatever is to be said against the taxing of alcohol, there is

nothing to be said for putting an increased tax upon tea, especially in Ireland. Tea in Ireland is almost as necessary as bread, for it is the common article of diet from one end of the country to the other; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to spend all his intelligence in endeavouring to discover what would be most disastrous to the people of Ireland, and fall most heavily upon them, he could not have made any greater discovery in that direction than by coming to the conclusion to put a tax upon tea. We are often told that the Irish people indulge too much in alcohol. That is a statement which is perfectly untrue, and which the figures will not for a moment support. But, whether it be true or not, why, if you believe it to be true, should you discourage temperance by putting a tax upon what is the substitute for alcohol, and that is tea? It is a most unjust and unfair thing, and it is a surprising thing to me that the whole Liberal party are not prepared as one man to resist the imposition of taxation upon an article consumed by the poorest of the people. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Member for West Monmouthshire, spoke of the hardship that would be inflicted by this and other taxation on the poorest communities, and the right hon. Gentleman said he would be glad to have the poor communities relieved to some extent. We deny altogether the right of any statesman on either side to refer to Ireland as a poor community. The hon. Member for North Islington admitted that this would fall heavily upon the poorer classes in Ireland, but he said that there were equally poor classes in this country and amongst a portion of his own constituency. That is perfectly true no doubt, but the Irish people are entitled to separate and special treatment in the matter of taxation under the Articles of the Act of Union. I know that it would not be in order for me to discuss the provisions of the Act of Union, but I give it as one of my reasons against this fresh taxation that under that Act we were entitled to have special treatment, and under the special circumstances which exist I say it is a most unfair thing to put this additional tax upon the Irish people. I do not know exactly how much it is estimated that this fresh tax upon tea will realise, but I am perfectly certain that the amount required could have been obtained by taxing some other commodity which would not fall so heavily upon the poorer classes as the tax upon tea will do. I cannot describe this tax as anything but a cruel proposal, because it says to the very poorest people of the country that, in order to defray the expenses of this war, we will put a tax upon that article which you consume at every one of your meals. If this tax is carried through, I hope that every Irish man, woman, and child, whenever they taste a cup of tea, either in the morning, midday, or evening, will remember that while doing so they are compelled by the Government of this country to help to pay for the slaughter of their own kith and kin in South Africa. You talk about the valour of Irish soldiers abroad, and that valour is now to be rewarded by putting fresh taxation upon the Irish people, and you are making them pay for the blood of their own brave fellow-countrymen which has been shed in South Africa. This is not only cruel, but it is the height of meanness. It is about the meanest thing England has done towards Ireland —and that is saying a very great thing indeed—to say that the Irish people, the great majority of whom are utterly opposed to the policy of which this taxation is the outcome, should be called upon to pay for it This is not Ireland's war, but it is England's war, and the Irish people ought not to be asked to pay more for their tea in order to pay for the cost of a campaign with which they have had nothing to do. Why does not England accept this Amendment and exempt Ireland from fresh taxation on tea? Why does not England have the common decency to pay for her own bloodthirsty transactions without asking us to do so? If the people were in a position in Ireland they would be amply justified in refusing to pay a single penny of fresh taxation, and I believe that if you taxed any other article not so necessary as tea the consumption of that article would fall off. You know perfectly well that the people must drink tea, because there is no substitute to be had for it; and, therefore, I believe that tea is selected by the Government in order to wring fresh taxation from the Irish people. I can only say that the whole of this thing, in my opinion—and I do not care what hon. Gentlemen opposite or around me may think of my statement — is what I regard as common brigandage and plunder

Mr. William Redmond.

and pillage, and it is a cruel attempt to make people pay for transactions of which they do not approve. Although there is no doubt that this Finance Bill will pass, and Ireland will be taxed to the tune of an additional million of money to keep this war going, I say that sooner or later the time will come when not merely the people in Ireland, but the working classes of this country, will also object to be called upon to have their breakfast table taxed in order that a war for the benefit, not of the masses, but for a gang of millionaires may be carried on.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I think if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had increased the tax upon wine we should have had a much more lively discussion in this House. I do not look at this matter from an Irish standpoint. I think it was a great mistake to put a tax upon tea either in England or Scotland. The extra tax should have been put upon intoxicating drinks which are so largely consumed by the drunken patriots who sing "The Absent-minded Beggar" at music halls. You are now putting a tax upon the very men who are opposed to this war. I have a very strong personal feeling upon this matter as one who does not drink tea, as a non-smoker, and also as a non-drinker of alcohol, and I feel that I have been treated very badly in this matter. It is not necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to suggest to me that we are paying the penalty for this war policy of the Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer turns to Ireland, and he finds there that the consumption of tea is larger than in England and Scotland, and so he puts his finger upon our country in order to raise this amount of money to defray the cost of this very unjust war. The hon. Member for South Belfast is now supporting a tax which presses very heavily upon the very poorest people in Ireland, and so he is as much to blame as any of the drunken jingoes who go to music-halls. Upon this question I agree in the main with what has been said by previous speakers. I remember a time not long ago when farm labourers used to consume wholesome food which would not have caused them to be overtaxed, but owing to changes over which the people themselves had no control tea has been substituted as an article of food. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have avoided this difficulty by putting a tremendous tax upon wines and spirits and other commodities of that kind, and I hope my hon. friend the Member for South Belfast will rise and support what I am putting before the Committee now. In Ireland we are opposed to this war. It is true that in certain parts of Belfast they have said that they are in favour of this war; but, nevertheless, they refuse to enlist. When I look through the lists of those who have been killed and wounded in this war——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will not be in order in referring to that subject.

MR. PINKERTON: I was only following in the lines of previous speakers. The tea-drinkers will find this tax press very heavily upon them. Nine-tenths of the people of Ireland are opposed to this war, and it is only in those parts of Ireland where they do not drink tea, but something stronger, that the war policy is supported.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): That is a slander upon Belfast.

MR. PINKERTON: I have no desire to run counter to the ruling which has just been given. I look upon this tax upon tea not only as disastrous to Ireland, but also as having a very bad effect in England and Scotland, because you are showing to every sober man and woman in England, Scotland, and Ireland that the jingo policy of the present Government is one that presses unduly upon the people, and that the men who have been instrumental in causing this war are now trying to frame the Budget so as to escape taxation.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): As I understand this Amendment, its object is to enter a protest against the imposition of this additional duty upon tea so far as Ireland is concerned. That Amendment has been met by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a two-fold way. First he argued that this imposition was a just one, and he put the case assuming that it pressed unfairly or unequally on Ireland, yet he said that there were no means of rectifying it, because it was impossible to differentiate the duty on the same article in the two countries. If that

[illegible] the duty on [illegible] between the [illegible] and there was no inconvenience [illegible] For other purposes [illegible] to combine those [illegible] forward for [illegible] century as an [illegible] to differ[illegible] with regard [illegible] Why the [illegible] system [illegible] is impossible [illegible] The abatement [illegible] specially provided [illegible] England and Ireland by [illegible] and by the Act of 1[illegible] contemplated that [illegible] rule [illegible] that whatever [illegible] wealthy England [illegible] equally borne [illegible] There is [illegible] that [illegible] in our constitution [illegible] the taxation [illegible] There is [illegible] that [illegible] abatements and [illegible] the different circumstances [illegible] were necessary [illegible] most certainly ought to [illegible] some other subject [illegible] the evil complained [illegible] because a reduction [illegible] is necessary not [illegible] Great Britain [illegible] opposite [illegible] a strong [illegible] their judg[illegible] them astray [illegible] having their [illegible] should support [illegible] regard to their [illegible] I would venture [illegible] of course [illegible] Ireland is re[illegible] chiefly by the [illegible] the gangway, with [illegible] seventeen exceptions. [illegible] Ireland should be [illegible] to taxation, and [illegible] would only be binding [illegible] this principle. The [illegible] Parliament had 300 Members, and they gave up about 200 Members upon the express condition that the articles of that treaty would be observed. One of those conditions was that the taxes should not be necessarily equal, but subject to exemptions and

[illegible] may make [illegible] make us bear it without murmur or complaint. Is that a fair and statesmanlike argument? It ignores the fact altogether that, up to a

Sergeant Hemphill

ent according to the different cir-
nces of the country. That was a
compact between the repre-
res of the people of Ireland and
tish Parliament, and that compact
being departed from. While I
hat it is a difficult matter to dis-
n between the two countries in
ce to this particular tax, I say that
eans should be devised to prevent
justice upon Ireland, because no
nt has been advanced from the
ide to show that it is an unavoid-
e.

DALY (Monaghan, S.): I have
reat pleasure in supporting the
ment of my hon. friend the Mem-
Waterford. I cannot, however,
ith some of the remarks made by
ht hon. Gentleman who has just
n. He regretted, as I regret also,
ere should be a tax upon tea. He
ed that the tax should be taken
gland as well as Ireland, but the
of England are not making any
on to it, and I take it for granted,
. Gentlemen on the other side
ot made any objection, that they
ite satisfied with the proposals
Chancellor of the Exchequer. We
, and protest bitterly and strongly,
this tax, because it will strike
ard on poor people in Ireland, and
it is imposed for the purpose of
g on a war which seven-eighths of
ple in Ireland protest against and
According to the Chancellor of
hequer, more tea per head of the
ion is used in Ireland than in
d, and therefore the tax will be
on Ireland than on this country.
had, from time to time, an oppor-
of seeing the food of labourers and
ople in Ireland, and I can assure the
ttee that tea is used at almost every
It might be said that milk should
more than tea, but the farms in
parts of Ireland are very small,
is more difficult to get milk in
ountry places than in the City of
. Since the creameries have been
hed in Ireland nearly all the milk
to them, and the consequence is
a and tea alone is the beverage
almost every meal. Labourers
g in the fields and on the roads
or their dinner meal a pot of tea
it of bread. Another objection I
this tax is that it will add a
quarter of a million to the taxation o
Ireland, which has been already proved
beyond all contradiction to be over-taxed
to the extent of three millions. The
right hon. Gentleman stated that it would
be very unfair to tax labourers in England
more heavily than labourers in Ireland,
but wages in this country are better than
in Ireland, and labourers can afford meat,
whereas there is no such thing as meat
used by labourers in small farms in
Ireland. Potatoes and "stirabout" and tea
are what they live on. I think, therefore,
the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do
well not to impose this extra tax on
Ireland. I would remind the right hon.
Gentleman that many manufactures are
carried on in this country which benefit
the labourers, and therefore it would not
matter so much if labourers were taxed
in this country as it would in Ireland.
Scarcely any of the money of the Govern-
ment is expended in Ireland for the pur-
poses of the war, and I hope, therefore, the
right hon. Gentleman will recognise that
it is not fair to put Ireland on a com-
parison with this country.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal,
E.): I desire to say one or two words
with regard to the argument of the
Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection
with the present proposals in reply to ob-
servations addressed to him from these
benches. First of all, he dwelt upon the
fact that the taxation on the con-
sumption of tea among the poorer classes
was the same in this country as in Ireland.
I think a very great distinction ought to
be drawn between the two countries in
respect of the present taxation. The dis-
tinction is founded on the fact, that
whereas the £250,000 extra which is im-
posed on the taxpayers of Ireland is
drawn away from Ireland, the extra
taxation imposed upon the taxpayers of
Great Britain is not drawn away from
Great Britain. It is paid in Great
Britain, and is spent in Great Britain,
but the extra quarter of a million is drawn
away from Ireland and is spent in this
country. It is one of a large number of
taxes all filtering in the same way, and
constituting a stream which is always
running to the depletion of Ireland and
the enrichment of England. What
is the necessary economic result?
Let me take as an illustration two
adjoining areas. Supposing that from
them we have a constant process of

evaporation, and that the moisture from that evaporation is condensed in the higher regions, and then falls as rain on one, and only one, of these two areas; what is the natural result? Clearly that one area becomes arid, while the other is moistened and fertilised and made rich. That is precisely the position in which Ireland and Great Britain stand to each other. The taxation drawn from Ireland and Great Britain is combined in one great reservoir, which, however, is opened only for the purpose of irrigating one country and one country only. That is the great distinction between the effect of taxation in Ireland and in England. Then the right hon. Gentleman suggests that because this tax is paid equally by all poor people in England and in Ireland there is therefore nothing more to be said. That is no answer whatever, and for this reason: we have a good ground for our complaint. Have the poor people of England no ground for complaint? Yes, they have, but, unfortunately for them, they have no spokesmen. The people of England are in many respects very astute, and the ruling classes are very good politicians, but there is probably no population on the face of the earth which is, from a political point of view, more intensely stupid and doltish than the people of England. I say so for this reason. The people of England in the mass have the power, if they will, to return to this House their own representatives and to dictate to them what taxes shall be imposed. No one will deny that proposition. But what do they do? They send back, election after election, men who have assented to the imposition of burdens entirely in the interests of the privileged classes and entirely at the cost of the industrial community. The great mass of your income is raised from indirect taxation, and if the aphorism of Carlyle that the great majority of mankind are undeniably fools were not true the people of England would not be guilty of the folly of sending to Parliament men who allow taxation to be imposed always for the relief of the privileged classes. We Irishmen witness it from year to year with astonishment as well as with regret. Our interests and the interests of the English working classes are identical, but the British being a stupid people take long to learn. We have above the gangway on this side hon. Gentlemen supposed to represent the intelligence of the commercial community. What do we hear from them with regard to the incidence of direct or indirect taxation? Nothing more than a pious opinion from an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, who rises merely to say that because this is a war tax the people should bear it. Why should the working people of England and Ireland, who do not want to be at war, be called upon to pay an extra tax to meet its expenses? Why should not those who want the war bear the cost of it? Why, the consumers of wine in this very Budget do not contribute a farthing. Are not they concerned in this war? Why should they be let off, while the consumers of tea are compelled to pay twopence in the pound? It is because the people of England are not properly represented in this House of Commons.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): Anyone who has studied the question must admit that the financial case of Ireland is as different from that of England as chalk is from cheese. You have been found guilty by a Commission of your own financial experts, with your own paid servants of the Crown as witnesses. They have admitted that Ireland is already over-taxed to the extent of 2¾ millions, and yet for the purposes of this war, which is condemned by the people of Ireland (except by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, who would not go out except Her Majesty made him a field marshal), you propose to impose an additional quarter of a million. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be better advised if he put a tax on other things, for example on property. Property is handed down from one generation to the other, and why should it not be taxed, instead of putting an additional tax upon the poor people of Ireland? If property were taxed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would probably be putting his hand in his own pocket. In Ireland tea is the only beverage of the people; there is no milk, owing to the creameries, and the milk that is returned from them is not fit for drinking purposes. As an Irish Member, I object to this additional taxation on the people of Ireland.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): The Chancellor of the Exchequer is certainly

dealing very hardly with the people of Ireland. The taxation of tea is entirely out of proportion to the other taxes he is dealing with. Tea is an article in very extensive consumption among the people of Ireland, and more consideration for them ought to have been shown. It is not a luxury, it is an absolute necessity. If the money is required it ought to be obtained from taxation on articles much better able to bear it than tea; such as wines, especially expensive wines. In connection with the increased taxation on tea I notice a peculiar omission. I would like to understand why the Chancellor of the Exchequer is dealing with tea in a different manner to that in which he is dealing with spirits, and why he has not included a clause similar to Clause 8 with regard to tea. If not too late, I would now move such a clause.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): May I point out that I have a clause down for that very object.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Ireland already contributes about three-quarters of a million of duty on tea to the British Empire. With the addition now proposed we may estimate that the aggregate tea duty which Ireland will be compelled to pay for the year 1899-1900 will amount to a million of money, and we believe that that taxation will press very severely on the poor of Ireland. Of course the argument may be used that if the Irish people cease to consume tea they will save the expense. The same kind of argument has been used in connection with the Catholic university question. You ask us to enter Trinity College, and we refuse. We have come to the conclusion that this tax is imposed on tea simply because the Irish people in proportion to their population consume a larger quantity of tea per head than you consume in England. It has been estimated that every inhabitant in Ireland consumes 7 lb. of tea per annum, as compared with 5½ lb. consumed per head in Great Britain. Therefore, not only is every man and woman in Ireland compelled to pay a larger amount per head for their tea, but also an increased amount in duty as compared with Great Britain, although in Great Britain the average income of a family is larger. If you take the average wage of an agricultural labourer in Ireland and in England the difference will be, roughly speaking, 100 per cent. in favour of the latter. Personally I can state that the average wage of an agricultural labourer in the county of Kerry does not reach 10s. a week throughout the year, and how much harder, therefore, is it for the poor labourer, who generally has a larger family than the English agricultural labourer, to bear this increased duty. We have made our protest and have refused by our votes in the division lobby to agree to this increased duty, and we have also refused to associate ourselves in any way in discharging the debt you have incurred in endeavouring to suppress the freedom of the Transvaal.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.) said he joined with his hon. friends in protesting against this additional tax of twopence in the pound on tea. He was in Ireland when the Budget speech was delivered, and when he opened the newspapers the next morning he was amazed and indignant that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have thought of raising a quarter of a million on tea. This tea tax would fall much heavier on Irishmen than on Englishmen or Scotchmen; for the average wage of an Irish labourer was not more than two shillings a day, compared with the average wage of four shillings of the English or Scottish labourer, while the Irish labourer's family drank far more tea than the English or Scotch. The poor people of Ireland had now no milk, and had to take to tea, and therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer might as well have taxed milk, since tea was the substitute of milk. Instead of increasing the tax on tea it ought to have been reduced; in fact, there ought to be no taxation on tea whatever to pay the expense of this most unjustifiable and iniquitous war. They ought to tax the capitalists who promoted the war. It surely ought not to pass the wit of man to make tea as free of taxes as bread. Luxuries and the property of the wealthy ought to be taxed for the whole expenses of this war. Some of the ardent enthusiastic jingoes ought to have their property taxed, instead of the poor Irish peasants who were eking out a miserable existence, scarcely knowing how they were to get a bite on the morrow. He entered his protest against the increase of the tax on tea, which, indeed, should be free.

Question put.

The Committee divided.—Ayes, 204 ; Noes, 49. (Division List No. 79.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A F.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, Jas. E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Billson, Alfred
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burt, Thomas
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth
Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chat.
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardign.
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Dyke, Rt Hn Sir William Hart
Fardell, Sir T. George
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (CityofLond.
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. H. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G. J. (St George's
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Heath, James
Hermon-Hodge, R. Trotter
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, William Henry
Hozier, Hon. J. H. Cecil
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kearley, Hudson E.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'l'nd
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'nsea
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptf'd
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Myers, Wm. Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW
Plunkett, Rt. Hn. H. Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Savory, Sir Joseph
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, J. Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, Eugene
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Ambrose, Robert
Baker, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Labouchere, Henry
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr M. A (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morris, Samuel
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterf'rd)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbro'gh)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES: Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment on the Paper, by the hon. Member for Bolton:—"Clause 1, page 1, line 20, leave out 'Tea, one pound, sixpence,' and insert 'Coal, for export, one shilling the ton,'" is not in order, as it proposes a new tax.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): Will I be in order to explain?——

THE CHAIRMAN: No.

MR. LOUGH said he had handed in an Amendment to substitute on page 1, clause 1, line 20, the word "four" for the word "six." The effect of that Amendment would be to keep the tea duty at the present figure. He had already stated on the Second Reading of the Bill that he believed the increase on the tea duty was not necessary, and that other taxes might have provided the Chancellor of the Exchequer with all the money that he required. His objection to the increased duty on tea was that it was out of all proportion to all other indirect taxation. It was an increase of 100 per cent., while the other increases were only 12½ per cent., and it went against the policy pursued by the House of Commons during the last fifty or sixty years. Since 1837 the tea tax had been gradually reduced, and he was sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reversing that policy, would not realise from it what he expected. It would be the same as in the case of the tobacco tax. A great many Members believed that the best policy to pursue was that of the free breakfast table. Owing to the reduction in the tea duty and the increased consumption of that commodity in this country, a great new industry had sprung up in the colonies—especially in the island of Ceylon, where tea cultivation rivalled that of the tea gardens of India; and the raising of the tea duty would be a great blow to the industry in that colony. No less than 250,000,000 lbs. of tea were distributed in this country, and on account of this new duty the whole course of that trade would be altered, and the public would have to pay for it.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'six' and insert the word 'four' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'six' stand part of the clause."

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said that his hon. friend the Member for West Islington had not put the case too strongly, as it affected not only Ireland, but the whole country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise £5,500,000 additional from indirect taxation, and a third of that, or £1,800,000, was to be taken from the tea-drinkers, who were the poorest class of consumers in the country. Of course, women largely drank tea, to whom it was not a luxury, but a necessity of life, as well as to a large proportion of the industrial community. What they ought to consider was the proportion which this tax bore to the value of the commodity itself. When Mr. Gladstone reduced the tea duty in 1865 to 1s., and afterwards to 6d., it was on the ground that the proportion of the duty to the wholesale value of the tea was too great. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself admitted that the value of tea averaged 9d.

in the pound, and a duty of 6d. on 9d. was 166 per cent., and it was regrettable that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have come down so heavily on that particular article. He could only surmise that political reasons had had more influence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer than financial reasons. He remembered that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came into office he said that tea was drunk by Radical teetotalers, and perhaps that idea was in his mind when he proposed to increase the duty on tea; for it was a matter of common knowledge that the tea industry was not politically organised as was the liquor traffic, and could not bring the same influence to bear on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought this was a most unequal method of dealing with taxation in this country. In conclusion, he hoped, though the increase of taxation might be only temporary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would refrain from commenting upon that fact. The scheme on which taxation ought to be raised was that the taxation was permanent, as indeed the present increase might be, because no one could say how long the war would last.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-on-Avon) said he had listened in vain to see what alternative would be suggested by the last speaker in place of the tea duty, because if the tax was taken off tea, he presumed it must be placed upon something else. The hon. Member for West Islington had said it could be made up from another source—that meant that it could be made up by direct taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise £6,667,000 by direct and £5,000,000 odd by indirect taxation, but if the proposal of the hon. Member for West Islington were followed £8,000,000 would be raised by direct and only £3,000,000 by indirect taxation. In his opinion tea was a perfectly fair subject for taxation, and in times of emergency such as a war the Government were quite justified in putting a considerable portion of the money required upon tea. Tea was a source of indirect taxation which bore upon everybody throughout the country.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): The hon. Member must surely be a teetotaler.

COLONEL MILWARD said that at the time of the Crimean War tea was taxed at 1s. 2d. a pound, and when it was reduced to 1s. that was said to be the final reduction that could be made. It was not the backbone or a component part of any other article of consumption, it was an article consumed by itself, and that was the one reason why it was a fair subject of taxation. The only other article of food which had in times of emergency been pressed into service was sugar, but there was one great difference between sugar and tea. Sugar was largely used in the manufacture of many other articles of food, and you could not tax it without taxing, for instance, confectionery, jams, sweets, chocolate, and even beer. A large trade had grown up in this country in the manufacture of jams, one of the reasons being that the ingredients thereof were not taxed. If sugar was taxed at twopence a pound it would raise £28,000,000. It had been suggested that it might be possible at this time to put a duty on sugar, and so get rid of the sugar bounties.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question of sugar does not arise, and I must ask the hon. Gentleman to confine his illustrations entirely to tea.

COLONEL MILWARD said, that being so, he could only reiterate the statement that tea was a fair subject of taxation. The taxes proposed were war taxes, and would be borne by the country without a murmur, and he congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and desired to support him in the proposals he brought forward.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) opposed the increased duty on tea because he believed it interfered with the trade in India and Ceylon which he desired to see developed, and he wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, before he increased the tax upon tea, he had conferred with the authorities in India and Ceylon as to what would be the effect of his proposals there. The right hon. Gentleman would no doubt remember that a suggested tax upon cotton brought about a very great displacement in that particular trade, and resulted in a Committee being appointed to inquire into the matter. He thought the present proposal was likely to have a corresponding effect in India and Ceylon.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The only way in which I can answer the question is by saying that I do not believe it will have any effect at all. The reduction in consumption in consequence of the increase of duty will, I believe, be very small, and in proof of that I may say, although the subject has been before the country now for some weeks, I have not had a single representation against the tax from anyone interested in the cultivation of tea.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire) said he desired to protest against the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, who justified the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the fact that they were extraordinary proposals. He could not forget the warning given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer some years previously, when he said that if the expenditure was not kept within limit the country must be prepared at some time to bear new burdens. The increase of the tea duty was to be regretted not because of the amount of duty imposed, but because of the fact that an impost of this kind always fell most heavily on the poorest in the land. Although the richer classes, no doubt, drank tea in about the same quantity as the poorer, the tax fell much more heavily on the cheaper qualities of tea than on the dearer, and taking the tax as a whole, there was no doubt that the poorer classes contributed a greater proportion of the amount raised by such a tax than the rich. The arguments advanced years ago in favour of a reduction in the tax on tea were just as applicable now as then, and he regretted it was necessary to reimpose a burden of this character.

MR. DALY was of opinion that direct taxation should be adopted to raise the larger amount of the money required. It was the action of the hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House which had caused the war for which the money was now asked, and he thought that it was only right that they should pay the larger share of the cost. It was perfectly true that at the time of the Crimean War tea was heavily taxed, but the consumption was at that time only one pound per head, whereas now it was six, and consequently the tax now would bear more heavily upon the people. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very ill advised to say that this tax was only for a year, because if any war like that of the Transvaal broke out, or a general election occurred, the duty on tea might go up to 1s. 6d. the pound. There was no knowing what the present Government would do, and to say the tax was going to be temporary to meet an emergency when no one knew how long the war would last was absurd. The right hon. Gentleman would be well advised to drop the tax altogether and thus do what would be a most popular act

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 135; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 80.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, J. E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John G. Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn Sir M H. (Bristol)
Bethell, Commander
Biddulph, Michael
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell Colonel Henry
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Chamberlain. J. Austen (Wor.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Col. Philip Hugh
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chat'm
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher. Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G. J. (St George's
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner

Heath, James
Houston, R. P.
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Llewelyn, Sr Dillwyn-(Swans'a
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pierpoint, Robert
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Apstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Ambrose, Robert
Baker, Sir John
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Caldwell, James
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Creane, Eugene
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas, (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Field, William (Dublin)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, William Henry
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jordan, Jeremiah
Leng, Sir John
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr M A (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon S.
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfar)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES:—Mr. Lough and Mr. Pickersgill.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

MR. FIELD: I beg to move the omission of Clause 1. I do so because, first of all, I object to this tax on a ground of principle. I believe it is a wrong policy to pursue at this age to increase an indirect tax. In my opinion, direct taxation is the proper method by which such money should be raised, and the incidence of taxation generally should press fairly upon the rich and the poor. In the history of the Reform Party the great programme was a free breakfast-table. It appears to me that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is taking a retrograde direction, because everyone in the country knows that tea is an absolute necessity, and by this tax we are falling back on the old exploded system of putting taxes on food. An hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite assured the House that, as well as he could recollect, the reduction in regard to the taxation on tea at a certain period came to a finality. So far as I can understand the policy of this House in regard to taxation, there is no such thing as a finality to the reduction of taxation to be laid down, nor could the doctrine of a limit to the increase of taxation be upheld. If ever the hon. and gallant Member who proposed such a doctrine as that comes to be Chancellor of the Exchequer he will find out that it would not be easy to act up to those dogmas. Tea is the beverage of the poor, especially in Ireland, and that is one of the reasons

why I object to this clause *in toto.* I have been in the West of Ireland during the time of the distress, and I have seen the poor people there drinking tea at all hours of the day and in the evening. They could obtain neither meat, cocoa, nor coffee, and it is because I feel so strongly that tea is the beverage of especially poor people that I am impelled to object to this clause. The better classes have a great many other beverages to which they can adhere if they choose, but, and particularly in Ireland, the poorer people have nothing to drink but tea. Tea is the very worst article on which an increased tax should be levied. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is desirous of levying a new tax I would suggest that it should be put on some imported manufactured articles, and not on an article of food generally consumed amongst the poor. I have another objection to this clause from a temperance point of view. I hold, as a temperance man, that the Government ought to encourage sobriety, and not to tempt or drive people to the use of alcoholic drinks. Tea is undoubtedly the safest beverage of which the people generally can partake, and it is a step altogether in the wrong direction that the tax thereon should be increased. Particularly at this present moment and for the present purpose do I object to any such taxation. One of the reasons why the consumption of tea has increased is because the amount of duty has been so much reduced that it has enabled tea to come into more general use amongst the poorer classes. I think that is a reason why the right hon. Gentleman should accept the arguments and considerations which have been advanced by Irish Members. I quite admit that the amount of the present increase is not in itself such as will prevent poor people buying tea, but I would like the right hon. Gentleman to remember that, if you begin on a wrong principle, and if it is found an easy matter to levy an increased duty on tea, the probability is that that duty will continue to go up. I am altogether opposed to that, and I am convinced that this is a step in the wrong direction. The right hon. Gentleman told us just now that no strong representations had been made to him from any part of England against this increase of taxation.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH was understood to say that he alluded to India, where tea was cultivated.

MR. FIELD: Probably he has not had representations from India about matters of this kind, but, unfortunately, India has a famine on hand, which at the present time takes up all her energies. However, I would not be surprised if in this country there were very few representations made on this point. My reason for holding that view is that the expenditure, to meet which taxation is levied on the community at large, is generally made in England and on English work, and therefore, if a small additional tax is put on tea, the English people are somewhat repaid by the employment which is provided in this country. But that argument does not hold good with us. One of the reasons why we are so much opposed to this over-taxation of Ireland is that we get no share whatever in the expenditure, whether with regard to militarism or anything else. Moreover, as an Irishman I protest against any increase of taxation for the purpose of carrying on a war which certainly is not popular in Ireland. We Irish Members and the Irish people, taken as a whole, are opposed to this war, and we have a right to protest against a war undertaken against our wishes. Naturally, as we are a minority in the House, we are obliged to bow to the will of the majority, but this House of Commons is apparently the only place in England at the present time where this right of free speech can be exercised, because if a man goes to a pro-Boer meeting outside he is exposed not only to insult and calumny but also to personal danger. Perhaps I am getting rather outside the subject, but I think it is a useful thing to be able to exercise that privilege in this House when we are not allowed to do so outside. I will not pursue the subject any further than to say that I am sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he had the power, would not desire to deny us the privilege of expressing our opinions in this House, and as an Irish Member, representing a not unimportant constituency, I must protest against a further tax being levied on tea in order that this war may be carried on. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will consider these arguments, which I have endeavoured to put before him with toleration, and I trust with a certain amount of completeness, from the point of view from

which I have looked at the subject—namely, as a temperance man, as one opposed to the war, and as an advocate for the poorer classes.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: There is a geniality about the hon. Member which compels me to say a few words in regard to this Amendment. I can assure him it is no agreeable thing for me to be obliged to impose additional duty on tea. I know that throughout the United Kingdom it is the drink of many persons, especially of the poorer classes. Though I do not happen to drink it myself——

MR. FIELD: So much the worse for you.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I know it is a very material comfort to them in their lives, which are often hard enough, and it is with very great regret that I feel myself obliged to impose this additional duty. But the hon. Member does me an injustice if he thinks that I look upon this as an instalment towards high taxation upon tea. I should be very sorry to consider it in any such light, and I am sure that in saying that I am voicing the opinion of practically every Member of the House. This extra twopence is purely, in my opinion, an exceptional tax, levied for the purpose of the present war. I have already expressed to the House my view on the subject. In our judgment—and that judgment has been confirmed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth to-night — it is absolutely necessary that, having to levy additional taxation for the purposes of the war, that taxation should be so levied as to apply practically to the whole country. We have levied the bulk of it on the income-tax payer; we have levied the remainder on alcohol, on tobacco, and, finally, on tea. If tea had been omitted there would have been a very large part of the population of the United Kingdom who would have contributed practically nothing towards the expenses of the war. I am bound to say that, in my judgment, for every fiscal reason and for every political reason, such a policy would have been a grave mistake, and I could not have consented to anything of the kind. Perhaps I may be asked why I did not choose some other article than tea, but no hon. Member had suggested any such article.

MR. FIELD: Sugar. [Cries of "No!"]

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That suggestion is met with a negative even from the colleagues of the hon. Member himself. It appears to be thought that I might have placed it upon alcoholic liquors; but I have not spared the trade in alcoholic liquors in this Budget. I do not wish to detain the Committee any longer, but I thought it right to make these few observations in reply to the hon. Member. The subject has been thoroughly threshed out, and I hope we may soon be permitted to come to a decision upon it.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that this tax on tea was an absolute necessity. Does he mean to say it was impossible to obtain the money in any other way? The right hon. Gentleman asks upon what other articles taxes could have been levied. There are hundreds. I could give the right hon. Gentleman a list of a great many taxes which to my mind would be much fairer and more equitable than this tax on tea. So far as I am concerned, I shall take a division against this clause. One of my reasons is the general one that I am opposed to the whole system of indirect taxation. I do not believe in indirect taxation. By indirect taxation you get a large amount of money out of the people, without their really realising that it goes into the Treasury, and therefore they do not pay sufficient care and attention to the expenditure of the country. When I came into Parliament the whole taxation of the country was about £50,000,000, and if you had levied direct taxation I am perfectly convinced you would never have arrived at the point when a Chancellor of the Exchequer might propose a Budget of about £100,000,000, and when there was a surplus not take off any taxation. I would have direct taxation for everything, except in regard to those who have only the absolute necessaries of life. When a person has a struggle to keep himself and his family going I do not think the State has any right to take anything from him, because by so doing it is taking away from what is necessary for life. I would have a proportional income tax, if you like to call it so, charging more and more according to the amount the individual has. In that way I would put the burden on the right

shoulders, whatever that burden might be. But if you have indirect taxation it appears to me that to impose it upon tea is one of the most unfair modes in which you can levy it. As has been said again and again, tea is really the beverage of the poorest in the country. A great many depend for their enjoyment of life on their being able to get this tea. There is another reason why I should not put it on tea, and that is that you do not have an *ad valorem* duty on tea. I perfectly admit that there would be the greatest possible difficulty in imposing an *ad valorem* duty on an article such as this, but that would be rather a reason for not having a tax on tea. Take tea at 10d. per pound; that would be only 3s. per annum to the individual. But take a family of six persons; it then represents 18s. per annum, and 18s. is a very large sum to levy on a family in this way, when the family has perhaps a wage of £50 a year or something of that sort, and they have to pay rates and so on in addition. There is one argument which has not yet been stated, and I am bound to say it is rather a difficult one to meet. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer entertains the same sound practical view with regard to the enfranchisement of women that I do. But has he considered this point—that no special tax should be levied on women if they are not represented? I come forward as the advocate of women in this House because I am opposed to them having votes. Women are the great tea-drinkers of the country, and you are really imposing a larger tax upon the female sex than upon the male sex proportionately when you put a duty on tea. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the increase will not be lasting, and that this is not an instalment of a high duty on tea. I quite agree with him; I do not suppose it is; but still it is not a step towards doing away with the duty on tea altogether. One of the reasons I am absolutely opposed to this is that a Chancellor of the Exchequer will naturally seize upon an existing tax when it is necessary to raise extra money. So long as there is a duty on tea there will always be a strong inclination to increase that duty if it is necessary to impose additional taxation. Therefore the only way to put an end to these increases of the tax upon tea is to do away with the tax altogether. We did away with the tax upon sugar. A Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer did away with it. At that time it was said that sugar was necessary in so many ways, but the confectionery business was not then so large as it is now. It was said that a tax upon sugar was a tax upon the poorest people, and upon that ground it was done away with. What is the result? The Chancellor of the Exchequer does not now dare to come forward with a proposal to put a tax upon sugar; he would be imposing a new tax. But because there happens to be a duty upon tea he thinks there will be no difficulty in getting the extra twopence from that source, and therefore it is imposed. I am, as I have always been, opposed to this tax upon tea. I am in favour of direct taxation; but, if you have indirect taxation, for goodness' sake do not take the one article which is the most used by the very poorest in the country. Take it from the rich. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is always boasting that the wealth of the country is going up by leaps and bounds. It is not going up so far as the poor old woman in the workhouse is concerned; it is going up with the richer class. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer says he has done his duty by calling upon the rich to pay a certain portion of this amount, and then calling upon the poor, I say that the rich would be able to pay without any difficulty far more than they at present do pay, whereas when you come down upon the poor and ask them to pay this extra tax you are asking them really to limit the only comfort they have at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says he has received no objections from India, but it is an obvious economic fact that if you reduce the taxation upon an article of this kind the consumption of that article increases, and if you put on taxes the contrary is the result. Therefore, India will suffer to a certain extent. During the Crimean War the case was different, because we got most of our tea from China and not from India, and it does seem to me preposterous while we are hearing so much about Imperial Federation and the "union of hearts" among our colonies that we should put an import duty upon the articles which are grown in one part of this area of the "union of hearts." I intend taking a vote against this clause, and whether it is carried or

not I shall then have the satisfaction of registering a protest against it.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Although I do not agree with some of the arguments used by the hon. Member, I may say that I heartily endorse his concluding remarks. I think in regard to this question that the sins of omission far exceed any possible errors of commission. The hon. Member who has just sat down has given expression to some very sound sentiments, for there are many people who fail to realise the importance of this question. I am glad to notice that in our great self-governing colonies these questions have been very prominently considered. I do not know whether hon. Members observed in their newspapers to-day, and also in Saturday's newspapers, reports of a most important discussion in the Canadian House of Commons. I think it is worth while referring to what took place there. The Canadian Budget was under consideration. It was not a Little Canadian Budget, as this is a Little England Budget. It was a great Imperial financial statement, which aimed at drawing closer the ties between the mother country and the colonies. A resolution was submitted providing that after the 1st of July next preferential duties should be imposed in favour of British products to the extent of 33⅓ per cent. So that, for every three dollars imposed upon the products of foreign countries, only two dollars would be imposed upon those from Great Britain. After that I take it that the teas from Ceylon and other portions of the British Empire will have an advantage over the tea from China. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will read the speech of Sir W. Laurier in detail, for I gather that similar facilities to those which have been offered to Great Britain are to be granted to those portions of the British Empire which reciprocate. If this is so, Ceylon teas, which are now taxed higher, will get into Canada for two dollars, as against three dollars placed upon China teas. I may point out that not long ago the Prime Minister of Canada was the recipient at the hands of my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin of the gold medal of the Cobden Club. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do well to imitate this Canadian Budget, which has been promoted under the Government of a gold medallist recently decorated by the Cobden Club.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman is going away from the subject before the Committee, and his arguments are too remote.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: This question has been debated all round on very general lines. I complain in this clause of the sins of omission quite as much as any hon. Member has complained of sins of commission. Taxation ought to be without a preferential element——

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman must confine himself to the question.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: My right hon. friend is intensely a Little Englander in finance. [AN HON. MEMBER: A new version.] I say it is the true version of it. I contend that, when all parts of our Empire are co-operating in a great national movement, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in duty bound to consider the rights and interests of our various colonies. I have shown that in arranging their duties the Legislature of Canada has given preference to British products, and I think one good turn deserves another. I say that all Budgets framed by any Government ought to be constructed upon lines of general policy and not merely upon isolated circumstances which concern only the community which have to provide the taxes. It is time that the customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies, by which our trade is carried on, should be placed on a more favourable footing. The Prime Ministers of the various colonies in 1897 had a conference on this question, and what was the result? They passed the following resolution—

"In the hope of improving the trade relations between the mother country and the colonies, the Premiers present undertake to confer with their colleagues with a view of seeing whether such a result can be properly secured by a preference being given by the colonies to the products of the United Kingdom."

That brings the matter more and more home to this House. This was a resolution unanimously adopted by all the representative Prime Ministers of all the self-governing colonies of the Empire, and they entertained this view——

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I must rise to order. The colonial Premiers who passed the resolution which the right hon. Gentleman is discussing represented colonies not one of which produces tea.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already warned the right hon. Gentleman that his remarks are not relevant.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I accept that ruling. I am aware that Ceylon is not a self-governing colony, and, perhaps, on these technical grounds it is not desirable that I should go deeply into the subject. But if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks he is going to burke a great question like this by rising to a point of order he is very much mistaken. My right hon. friend has introduced a Little England Budget, and has defended it by Little England arguments, and he is now running counter to the policy adopted by the colonies of the Empire.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has prejudiced a good case by too much generalisation. But I am sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not be deterred by the taunt of the right hon. Gentleman that he has produced a Little England Budget.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I was giving expression to the opinion of the colonies.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Others as well as himself have had to bear the brunt of that epithet. I again say that the right hon. Gentleman has prejudiced a good case by indulging in this incursion into generalised finance. I think there was a certain amount of truth in the protest he made on behalf of Indian tea. He referred to Ceylon tea, but I presume he meant India tea as well. I think that case was well stated by my hon. friend the Member for Northampton. I understand that hundreds and thousands of our Indian fellow-subjects live upon the tea industry, and I should be very sorry to do anything which will add, as this Budget does, an obstruction to the development of that industry. I do not at all agree with the larger views which the right hon. Gentleman indulged in, and I will not follow him into those points. On every possible occasion for many years I have voted against this duty, and I have always voted in favour of the reduction of the tax upon tea. I should have voted against this increase which is now proposed in the division which I understand has taken place, but unfortunately I was not present when the division was taken, and the only opportunity I have of recording my opinion is by voting against the clause as a protest against any portion of this war tax being laid upon the tea-drinkers. I sympathise with what has been said by the hon. Member for Northampton in the speech he has just made. Considering the resources of this great country and the other means which might have been brought under taxation, it is most hard and unfair that any portion of this tax should be placed upon the very poorest of the poor. But it is no use enlarging upon that topic. I suppose the principle which the right hon. Gentleman goes on is that, as far as possible, you ought to deduct from the supposed income of every individual taxpayer what is necessary for the maintenance of life, and that taxation should have reference to this theory. Nevertheless, I think fourpence a pound on tea is too much, because you put a large responsibility for this war upon the very people who are least able to bear it. There is one fact I have gathered with regard to Ireland, and it is that an Indian tea merchant tells me that the very best teas have their best market in Ireland, and that Indian teas, will not, after all, suffer so much by this taxation. With reference to other sources of taxation, I refer to licensed duties. I think the proper occasion to deal with this matter would be on the additional taxation which is proposed on liquor under this Bill, and I do not propose to discuss it at this stage, only to say that I do not agree that an increase of the duties on licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors would be a tax upon the commodity itself. It would be a tax on the monopoly, but not on the commodity, and I hope to have an opportunity when the right hon. Gentleman proposes to increase the tax on that com-

modity to say that I do not propose to accept it. [Cries of "Divide, divide!"]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I am very much surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer join in the cry of "Divide, divide," because I have not discussed this question at all. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken does an injustice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by reproaching him with not having levied the tax upon those responsible for this war. I say the women are more responsible for this war than the men, for it is the women who drink tea. The hon. Member also said that there are other taxes which the right hon. Gentleman might have levied in preference to this. He forgets that in order to do what he suggests he would have to provide a Chancellor of the Exchequer with an imagination and a capacity for estimating the different values of different taxes, and the different capacities of the taxpayers of the Empire to pay them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will not consider any other forms of taxation, and he rejected some very modest suggestions which I made with regard to furs and feathers, and other things. The hon. Gentleman opposite truly observed that 90 per cent. of the tea which comes into this country is furnished by growers of tea in British possessions. That is a strong argument for increasing the tax on tea. It would not be in order for me upon this clause to go into the question, which has been so fully debated by the Irish Members opposite, as to whether some part of the Empire should be exempted from this tax. Still I do say that the fact that this tax affects to a large extent the Queen's subjects abroad is a strong reason for voting against this clause. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer always insists upon piling his taxes upon existing sources of taxation. He has had to meet a large increase in the expenditure, and he does it first of all by frittering away his surplus. Then he puts fourpence upon the income tax and twopence on tea. This is a most stupendous and enormous tax upon tea. It is, taking the average, an increase of sixty per cent., for there is a great deal of tea comes into this country which is only worth sixpence a pound or less, and on the whole of that tea which is drunk by the poorer classes the increase in the tax to them must be quite 100 per cent. Fine teas fetch 4s. and 5s. per pound. In the case of tea at 5s. per pound, which is the sort that some of us drink, the increase in the tax is only about ten per cent. instead of 100 per cent. The Committee will see the stupendous difference in a tax which imposes an increase of only ten per cent. in the case of the rich people and a tax which practically amounts to 100 per cent. in the case of the tea mostly used by the poor. Surely there is something wrong in a taxation which taxes per pound weight instead of per pound value. This is only another instance of the extraordinary way in which we deal with our indirect taxation, and we profess to be a Free Trade country. I think we have the most insane customs revenue in the world. We levy more duties than any other country in the world, except the United States, and we levy our taxes upon three or four articles alone on the most extravagant and outrageous rates. Under these circumstances our system taxes the producers in our colonies and our own consumers, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had considered some other class of the community besides the landed class I think he would have reconsidered this clause in regard to tea, and he would have had some patience for those who desire to discuss it. Why he should have thought it necessary to interrupt me before I had said a word I am still unable to imagine, and I can only suppose that it was owing to the irritation caused by the thrust of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, which he endeavoured to parry by directing a thrust at me. I am not prepared to vote against the clause, because the country is in difficult straits and we must find the money. But I do feel that the tea duty cannot go on as it is now, and that at some future time we shall have to consider the whole bearing of our taxation and especially the extraordinary and outrageous amount of our indirect taxation as compared to direct taxation.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 172; Noes, 69. (Division List No. 81.)

AYES.

d-Hood, Capt Sir. Alex F.
n, Robert Andrew
lale, Edward Mervyn
d, Alfred
ison, Rt. Hon. John
n, Sir John (Yorkshire)
y, James (Walworth)
e, James E. B. (Inverness)
, John George Alexander
ury, Frederick George
, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
ey, George C. T.
l, Rt Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
ell, Commander
alph, Michael
ston-Houston, John
lell, Colonel Henry
r, Henry Cosmo Orme
ield, William Robert
es, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
es, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
rick, Rt. Hon. St. John
rd, Sir Harry
Thomas
le, William Walter
ndish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
ndish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
berlain, Rt. Hon J. (Birm.
berlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
lin, Rt. Hon. Henry
rington, Spencer
, Octavius Leigh
ill, Douglas Harry
ngs, Rt. Hon. Jesse
nb, Sir John Charles Ready
on, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
ett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
wallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Irwin E. Bainbridge
s, Alexander (Glasgow)
tt, Hon. Henry
on, Viscount
ac, Colonel Philip Hugh
eith, Earl of
ymple, Sir Charles.
es, Sir H. D. (hatham)
y, Colonel
nson, Robert Edmond
gton, Sir John Edward
las, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
ell, Sir T. George
wes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
, George H.
y, Sir Robert Bannatyne
, Frederick William
nery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (City of Lon.
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Horniman, Frederick John
Houston, R. P.
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Hearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick. William.
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Crn.
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pierpoint, Robert
Plunkett, Rt. Hn. H. Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollitt, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES
Mr. Anstruther and Mr Fisher.

NOES.

ham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
, William (Gateshead)
rose, Robert
r, Sir John
y, E. (Cork, S.)
on, Alfred
e, Edward
n, Thomas Dolling
s, John
well, James
cy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Curran, Thos. B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Field, William (Dublin)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazell, Walter
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hogan James Francis
Holland, William Henry
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jordan, Jeremiah
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land
Leng, Sir John
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M A (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
Morris, Samuel
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pease, J. A. (Nortumberland)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fredk. W. (Norfolk)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Mendl.

Clause 2:—

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, in moving the Amendment standing next on the Paper in his name, said that he moved it because he believed that next to the tax upon tea the tax upon tobacco would fall more heavily upon the poorer classes in Ireland than anything else. He had no objection whatever to the increased tax on cigars and the better class tobaccos, such as cavendish and negro head, because those who smoked those classes could afford to pay; what the people of Ireland did object to, and object to most strongly, was the increased taxation of the cheaper kinds of tobacco consumed by the great majority of the poorer classes. He was not surprised at hon. Gentlemen opposite, who both inside the House and elsewhere were in the habit of indulging in the luxury of a cigar costing 1s. 6d. or 2s. [Cries of Oh, oh!]—Hon. Gentlemen need not attempt to stop him; he was a member of the Kitchen Committee, and he knew what he was saying. It was a common thing for hon. Gentlemen, both inside the House and elsewhere, to smoke quantities of cigars at the prices he had stated, and he was surprised to find that there was only an extra sixpence on the pound put upon these imported cigars, whilst on ordinary manufactured tobacco there was an increase in the duty of fourpence. Such taxation was altogether unfair and unjust, and, not only so, but from the information which he had received from people interested in the tobacco trade, it was unnecessary, inasmuch as imported cigars would easily bear an increased duty of 2s. on the pound, whilst the extra fourpence on the pound on the cheaper tobacco would press most unfairly and out of all proportion upon the class of the people who smoked it. It was an altogether unfair arrangement that the imported cigars of the rich people of the country should be increased by so small an amount, whilst the tobacco of the poor——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman's argument would be more relevant to the Amendment which follows lower down in the clause than that at present before the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Might I ask you, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, to point out the Amendment to which you refer?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's Amendment is to omit the words "or Ireland," and his observations are not relevant to the Amendment.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was, by his observations, endeavouring to show his objection to the increase of taxation in Ireland, because it pressed not so heavily on imported cigars but on unmanufactured tobacco of a cheaper character, which was smoked by the great bulk of the people of Ireland. He submitted with great deference that he was in perfect order in the remarks he had made. Had a proportionate amount of 1s. or 1s. 8d., or even 2s., a pound been put on imported cigars, he would not then have moved to remit this tax, as it would not in that case have been so unfair, but, in his opinion, it was monstrously unfair to say that those who could afford to pay extravagant sums for a cigar which they could smoke in ten minutes should only pay an extra duty of sixpence on the pound, and that the poor man, who could only afford to smoke tobacco of the cheapest kind, should pay fourpence. It was, to his mind, a most unequal proposal, and one which did not hold a just balance between the consumers of high-class tobaccos and those who could only afford to consume the cheaper kinds. He desired to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had re-

ceived any representation from those interested in the tobacco trade, upon the subject of the increase in the duty on tobacco as against that imposed on cigars. Whether the right hon. Gentlemen had representations made to him or not, he (Mr. Redmond) did not know, but he did know that he (Mr. Redmond) had been asked by persons connected with the largest houses in the tobacco trade whether arrangements could be made for a deputation to wait upon the right hon. Gentleman to point out the injustice of these new impositions He could not understand the principle upon which the right hon. Gentleman had acted, because those who smoked cigars were far better able to bear the burden than the persons who smoked tobacco. The least that the right hon. Gentleman might have done would have been to make the duty on cigars double that which he proposed to put on tobacco. In moving to exclude Ireland in regard to this he was dealing more particularly with the comparative unfairness between the duties on cigars and tobacco, because it was evident that the duty was so arranged, not that the burden should fall equally upon all classes, but that it should lay lightly on the rich and heavily on the poor. Clause 1 of the Bill dealt with the increase of the duty upon tea, and Clause 1 had been disposed of. This clause dealt with the increase in the duty on tobacco, and he thought that the greatest hardship that could be inflicted on the poor, after increasing the duty on tea, was to increase the duty on tobacco. It would no doubt be argued that the people would be better off if they did not smoke, and that no doubt might be true; but we must take the world as we find it, and every class required some little enjoyment and relaxation from their daily toil, and that they found in the morning going to work, and in the evening returning therefrom, in smoking a pipeful of tobacco. Tobacco is a thing that exists, it is a thing we send to our soldiers in South Africa, and is an article of consumption among the working classes. If the Government taxed it they were entitled to do so, but he challenged the Liberal party to say that it was fair to tax the higher classes of tobacco at sixpence while the lower classes were taxed at only twopence less. There were few industries in Ireland, but tobacco manufacture was one. There were several large and flourishing establishments in Ireland, giving employment to a large number of people, and this industry was directly attacked by the measure before the House, and it seemed to him that the main object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been to single out the few remaining industries which flourished in Ireland and attack them. There was a proposal to tax beer and brewing which was well known to be among the few remaining industries of the country, and all these taxes would strike a fatal blow to the taxes that remained. It was the duty of the Irish representatives to protest against their imposition with voice and by vote. He could assure the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he had received from an organisation of the tobacco industry a representation that imported cigars could much better afford to pay 2s. than the cheaper forms of tobacco could pay the 4d. proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the interests of fair play, to consider whether it would not be possible to remodel the clause so that a tax might be put on expensive cigars, and a reduction made of the duty on cheap forms of tobacco. Such a plan would arouse no opposition whatever. Irish Members were sometimes severely criticised in the newspapers and held up to public odium for statements made in the House, but at the same time they repeatedly received from the representatives of large interests in the country commendations of what they had said, and strong advice to continue to make the protests they had already made. He would not have interfered at this stage had he not been encouraged to do so by a representative organisation of the tobacco trade of the country, which asked him to suggest a 2s. tax on foreign cigars, and a reduction of the duty on the cheaper forms of tobacco. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was putting an additional tax of 8¼ per cent. on the commodity which was used by the industrial classes, and only 1¼ per cent. on foreign cigars, which were consumed by the richer classes. He smoked himself; he was not one of those who believed that tobacco was injurious, in moderation. He liked to see a working man smoking his pipe—he thought it good style; but at the same time he had often thought there was no form of extravagance more un-

reasonable than that indulged in by a man who smoked a cigar which cost 1s. or 1s. 6d., or even 2s.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that nothing was further from his intention than to transgress the ruling of the Chair. His particular reason for moving the exclusion of Ireland from these proposals was that they were unfair, because they put a comparatively light tax on expensive cigars used by wealthy men, and a comparatively high one on cheaper forms of tobacco. He was pleading for increased taxation on foreign cigars, because he had often felt that there was no form of luxury indulged in more unreasonable and more deplorable than smoking expensive cigars.

THE CHAIRMAN: I invite the hon. Member to give to the Committee some proof that the lower class of tobacco is more largely consumed in Ireland than in England.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that he hoped the Committee would bear with him, and listen to his argument. He did not think it required any words to prove that cheap tobacco was more consumed in Ireland than imported foreign cigars. He held that it was an abominable form of luxury which ought to be highly taxed, for a man to smoke in ten minutes or so a cigar which cost 1s. 6d. or 2s., the amount which would pay for the working man's tobacco for ten days. The Government professed to hold the scales equally as between all classes, and that all classes should pay something towards the cost of the war; but he maintained that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals in regard to cigars and tobacco did not do equal justice to all classes. He begged to move that on Clause 2, line 22, the word "Ireland" be left out. He would be extremely disappointed if there were not a few members of the Liberal party untainted with the war fever who would support him.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, to leave out the words 'or Ireland.'"—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. William Redmond.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Member has moved to exclude Ireland from the operation of the new tariff, and he has done so because he considers that the tax on unmanufactured tobacco is too high as compared with that upon cigars. It may be right or wrong to keep up the proportion between cigars and tobacco as is proposed by this clause, but what has that to do with the proposition whether Ireland should or should not be included in the new tax upon tobacco? I am sure the hon. Gentleman fairly stated the representations which had been made to him by tobacco manufacturers with regard to their desire to have increased taxation on foreign cigars. I have had a good many representations of the same kind made to me, and I understand what they mean. It is a very natural thing for tobacco manufacturers in Great Britain or in Ireland to desire that such a tax should be placed on foreign cigars as practically to protect their own industry, but I have not made that proposal, and I do not propose to make it now. I am pretty sure that the tobacco manufacturers who approached the hon. Member never suggested that it would be advisable that there should be one tax on tobacco in Great Britain and another tax in Ireland. The hon. Member stated, I believe quite correctly, that the manufacture of tobacco is a flourishing industry in Ireland; but I cannot conceive anything more likely to injure that industry than differential duties in Great Britain and Ireland. If you had a lower tax in Ireland than in England you would require to have different Custom House regulations in the two countries, which would greatly interfere with the trade. If the hon. Member is anxious that the tobacco manufacture of Ireland should prosper he could not do it a worse service than to propose this resolution.

MR. LOUGH said there was no tax which pressed so severely on the poor of Ireland as the tobacco tax; and there was no grievance which appealed more to the imagination of the Irishman than this high duty on tobacco which the House had imposed for about seventy years. The reason why no one complained of the tobacco tax in Great Britain was because it was as low to-day as ever it had been in Great Britain, but the reason why the Irish objected to it was that it was higher in Ireland now than when the tax was

first imposed in 1819, when there was a very cruel stamping out of the growth of coarse tobacco in the West of Ireland. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he could not accept the Amendment in the form in which it was moved, whether he could not do something to remove the grievance of the Irish people in regard to the high duty on a common article of consumption. The consumption of beer in England was very like the consumption of tobacco in Ireland. Now, all people in England who lived in houses under a valuation of £8 were allowed to brew beer free of duty for their own use. Why, then, not allow the poor people of Ireland to grow tobacco for their own use free of duty? The Chancellor of the Exchequer's objection to different duties in England and Ireland was that it would involve different customs regulations, and the right hon. Gentleman also talked about the evils that would ensue from it. That was not so easily proved. If the custom house would cause some inconvenience, it would bring enormous advantages as well. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not know how much tobacco was consumed in Ireland, and how much was collected from tobacco duties; and he never could know until he had got a custom house. The custom house was the brains of a commercial nation. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh, oh!" and laughter.] He knew that was a most unpopular argument, but surely he might be allowed to make use of it. Until the custom house was re-established they could never know anything about the social and economic conditions of Ireland. They could not tell without a custom house how much food went into Ireland, nor how much of any product went out of Ireland; and want of knowledge in regard to these essential facts was one of the reasons why the House was so deplorably weak in its attempts to deal with Ireland. A custom house was only denied to Ireland through the ignorance of the House in these matters. They had no custom house, because their commerce was with Great Britain. Every foreigner knew how much goods went into his country or out of it; the only man who knew nothing about that was the Irishman. (Laughter.) This was no joke. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture had done more for Irish industry than any other man; but he could not tell, and no man could tell, whether he had added one pound of butter to the exports from Ireland, and all because there was no custom house in Ireland. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer or any other wiseacre opposite would kill the evils he spoke of without a custom house, then he would admit that he was wrong; but until they restored the custom house to Ireland, all the social and economic facts bearing on the condition of the country could not be made known to the House, or to anyone else. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was one of the most admirable men he ever met with when he spoke on British subjects; but when he talked in regard to Ireland all his natural intelligence deserted him. Then he ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Member for Bristol, and became merely the mouthpiece of the prejudices and folly of the English Parliament. The right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire, who was one of the Chancellor's chief supporters in the House, was as much to blame as the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself if there was anything wrong. In England the proportion of indirect taxation is 48 per cent., whereas in Ireland it is 60 per cent. That would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire. He said it was serious evil, but why had he not courage enough to suggest a means of dealing with it? In a speech he made on this very subject when referring to the Report of the Financial Relations Commission——

THE CHAIRMAN: The question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland cannot be debated on each separate duty. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to confine himself to the tobacco duty.

MR. LOUGH: I bow with respect to the ruling of the Chair. My point is that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accept this Amendment it would remove the existing inequality to the extent of £150,000 a year. I was speaking of the tone of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, and I remember he said in this House that equalisation of rates did not mean equalisation of burden. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that this was a great grievance, but it is a grievance that might be corrected to some extent if this tobacco tax were not applied to Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman the Mem-

ber for West Monmouthshire sees great difficulty in the way of differential taxation, and yet admits the grievance of Ireland, then I would ask him or the Chancellor of the Exchequer to suggest some other remedy. For my part I think these grievances are real grievances, and that the Irish Members who are voicing the opinions of the Irish people are met with only feeble excuses. This Budget is not a fair Budget. It is unfair to Ireland especially, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot see his way to accept the amendment, I would appeal to him, by the good disposition which he has displayed towards Ireland, whether he cannot do something to mitigate what is an undoubted hardship.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will respond to the appeal of my hon. friend. I admit that a tax of this kind falls with the greatest weight on the poorest people. There is a large concentrated accumulation of poor people in Ireland, but there is also a large number of poor people in England, more scattered in their distribution, and I will answer my hon. friend, who is a very fervent and ingenious financier, by asking him another question. How does he propose to deal with the poor people in England with reference to the tobacco duty?

MR. LOUGH: We have already dealt with that matter by reducing the proportion of indirect taxation to 48 per cent., while in Ireland it remains at 73 per cent. That is the answer.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The poor people do not pay direct taxation, therefore I do not know how we are to deal out justice to the poor in both countries by excluding the people of Ireland from this taxation. On the subject of customs my hon. friend seems to desire that custom-houses should be set up for the purpose of obtaining statistical information with reference to the trade of Ireland. The Scotch people are a very practical people; how would they like to have a cordon stretched from Berwick-on-Tweed to the western coast of Scotland for the purpose of obtaining statistical information as to how much of their produce went to England, and how much English produce came into Scotland? I think they would be of the opinion that that would do them a great deal more harm than the statistical information they might obtain would do them good.

MR. LOUGH: This is a most interesting point, but the answer is as easy as A B C. The trade of Scotland is mainly with foreign parts and the colonies. She depends on minerals, and her trade is export trade from Glasgow, Leith, and Aberdeen, just as the English export trade is from London, Liverpool, Cardiff, and other ports. I can show the right hon. Gentleman books issued by this House, in which every fact is recorded with reference to England, Scotland, and Wales, which I now ask should be recorded as regards Ireland. There is no record of the great trades in Ireland because the trading is with this country, but as regards the great trades in England and Scotland, correct records are kept, because the trading is with foreign ports.

MR. FLYNN: I do not know whether I can agree with the hon. Member for West Islington that a custom-house is the brains of the commerce of a country. To some extent it is an indicator of how commerce is going, especially articles paying excise or customs duties. In previous years the customs authorities in Ireland used to go to the trouble of obtaining from shipping and railway companies the amount of the exports and imports and of furnishing a weekly return, but that has been discontinued because the staffs are too lazy. But I do not think that that quite meets the custom-house cordon. There is a difference in establishing a custom-house cordon between England and Ireland, especially with regard to tobacco. The reason why my hon. friend has moved this Amendment is because he represents an Irish constituency. The grievance presses hardly on the Irish people, and therefore his arguments have greater cogency and force than if they referred to Great Britain, though there is no reason why the English working man should not be excluded also. We have no objection at all, and should be glad if the tobacco duties were abolished altogether. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had deliberately set out to levy indirect taxation upon commodities largely consumed in Ireland, and which would therefore press more heavily on the Irish people, he could not do better than he has done —namely, to select tea, tobacco, beer, and spirits. Indeed, it almost looks like a re-enactment of the sumptuary laws. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says the Irish people cannot be poor because they smoke so much tobacco. He has not,

however, levied the taxes from philanthropic or temperance motives, but in order to raise money, and if he found that with the increased duties the consumption of tea and tobacco goes down in Ireland, no one would be more disappointed than the right hon. Gentleman. The policy which appears to underlie the arguments on both sides of the House is that these things are luxuries, or, at any rate, not necessaries, and that, therefore, you are justified in taxing them, whereas you would not be justified in taxing flour, bread, or meat. But you did not discover that until the repeal of the Corn Laws. Prior to the repeal of the Corn Laws an enormous amount of taxation fell on commodities consumed by the English working classes, and also on articles used in connection with manufacture. You abolished all that, and therefore the burden of indirect taxation now falls more heavily in Ireland than ever before. In the year 1819–20 it was 11s. 11d. per head, and in 1893–94 £1 0s. 9d., or an increase of 90 per cent. Indirect taxation in Great Britain was in 1819–20 £2 8s. 7d.; in 1893–94 it was reduced to £1 4s. 1d. That means that indirect taxation per head in England has decreased 50 per cent., whereas it has increased 90 per cent. in Ireland. Could not you find other sources of direct taxation in order not to have to increase indirect taxation in a country like Ireland? In a damp country like Ireland very much more tobacco will naturally be smoked than in a warmer country. There is no doubt about it that the working man consumes in proportion to his means more tobacco than the rich man. Surely a man with £1,000 or £10,000 a year could more easily afford 6d. on his cigars than the poor man can afford an addition of 4d. per pound on his tobacco. The increase in this Budget on cigars is only 1½ per cent., whereas it is 8 per cent. on tobacco. In pleading for the Irish working man we are also pleading for the British working man. There is no doubt that tobacco is no longer a luxury; it is practically a necessity, and without dropping too much into autobiography I may say that for the short month I was confined in one of Her Majesty's prisons I think I bore three days bread and water with equanimity; I bore the plank bed with a certain amount of stoicism, and I managed to get through the plum-duff without very much discomfort and certainly without grumbling; but I would have been prepared to forego two of those miserable meals for a pipe of tobacco or a cigarette. To deprive the working man of his pipe and tobacco is a great deprivation indeed. I have often heard a working man say that he would prefer to go without his breakfast rather than a pipe of tobacco, and when a man is not well fed, or fed on coarse food, or when perhaps he cannot get a proper breakfast until a late hour, then a "shough" of the pipe, as it is called, is more gratifying and grateful than perhaps dainty food. If this argument of taxing tobacco, beer, and spirits is pushed too far, you will be re-enacting the sumptuary laws. We cannot forget that the British Treasury wishing to retain indirect taxation has, by some peculiar species of ingenuity, succeeded in retaining those articles of common consumption which fall more heavily on Ireland. Under these circumstances we are entitled to claim this exemption for Ireland. We should be willing to claim it for all classes in Great Britain as well, but as the representatives of Irish constituencies, who are averse to all taxation in connection with the war, we certainly claim that this Amendment should be accepted by the Committee.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 210; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 82.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John Geo. Alexander
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Br'tol)
Bethell, Commander
Billson, Alfred
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Captain H. F. (Mid'sex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready

Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
Emmott, Aifred
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn G. J. (St G'rge's
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hn. C. Seale-Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lambert, George
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumbl'la'd
Lecky, Rt Hon William Edw. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'nsea
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles, (Liverpool
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Penn, John
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Frances Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Mr. Frederick Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt Hon Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, Eugene
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, Fredk. W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Burns, John
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr M A. (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Morris, Samuel
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Malley, William
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES:—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question proposed, "That Clause 2 ınd part of the Bill."

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) moved the ıission of the clause. He said his mendment would simply have for its 'ect to leave the tobacco duty at the me figure at which it now stood. It ɔuld be in the memory of the House at two years ago he raised the question ı two or three occasions, and the Chanllor of the Exchequer at last saw his ıy to reduce the tobacco tax by 6d. ıring the debate that took place on that casion the Chancellor of the Exchequer lmitted that the tobacco tax was one at bore unfairly on the working classes, ıd that it was a tax also open to the ɔjection that it was of all taxes, with ɔssibly the exception of the tax on Irish ɔirits, the highest tax in proportion to ıe cost of the article taxed. The tax on ɔbacco was a tax of 300 or 400 per cent. n the cost of the article, and that was monstrous impost. When the fact was ept in mind that this article was conımed mainly by the poorer classes, it did ppear, on that ground alone, that it was n unfair article to select for a special mergency war tax, because while it was n article which was almost a necesity to the poorer classes, it was ıxed far in excess of any other article of onsumption that could be named. 'herefore, on the general principle affectıg the whole of the United Kingdom nd all classes in the United Kingdom, he hought the Chancellor of the Exchequer ras very badly advised in deciding to vithdraw the concession which he made ıome two years ago in the case of the ɔbacco tax. While he had no intention ɔf discussing the financial relations of Ireland, he was distinctly entitled to point ıut the special reasons from the Irish oint of view why the concession made by ıe Chancellor of the Exchequer on the ɔbacco tax was a good one. It was nall, but so far as it went, it went toards undoing the injustice they had mplained of so often. The tobacco tax d a very curious history. It was a very l English tax, but it was a very modern sh tax. It was only brought up to the ıglish figure in Ireland in 1842. There s another fact in connection with the story of the tobacco tax in Ireland orth bearing in mind. Up to the year 827 Ireland grew tobacco on a considerole scale, and not only was that the case, but up to that year, while the duty on all foreign grown tobacco was 3s. 6d. per lb., the duty on tobacco grown in Ireland was only 1s. 3d., and consequently the Irish had the advantage of growing tobacco under a protection of 2s. 3d. in the pound, and it did a very profitable trade. When the Act of 1827 was passed, withdrawing this protection from Ireland, the Government had to buy up the Irish crop of tobacco at a cost of many thousands of pounds. In 1896 the figures of the tobacco tax were as follows:—In England and Wales the tax produced £8,400,000, in Scotland £1,100,000, and in Ireland £1,200,000, so that of the total tobacco tax Ireland paid one-eighth. They all knew that the total proportion of the tax revenue of the United Kingdom paid by Ireland at that time was only one-twelfth—a vastly too great proportion—but when they compared it with the total of one-eighth produced by the tobacco tax it was easy to see how unfairly that tax bore on the people of Ireland. It was one of the taxes, also, which illustrated most clearly the extraordinary fallacy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of all the hon. Gentlemen on that bench, who argued against the fact of the Irish people having any grievance. An equal tax on tobacco, levied on a country like Ireland, afforded the most clear and absolute answer to the argument that the tobacco tax was levied equally all over the United Kingdom. He ventured to say that the average Irish labourer did not earn half the wages of the average English labourer, taking all classes of labourers together, and yet he had as great a passion for tobacco as the English labourer. Anyone had only to work the thing out as an arithmetical sum to see how enormously greater a proportion of his yearly revenue went upon this practical necessity—he hardly cared to call it a luxury. They could easily see how monstrously hard it was upon the Irish labourers to have to spend such a proportion of their income on the tobacco tax as compared with the labourers or workmen of this country. He might say the same of the small farmers in Ireland. It was perfectly astonishing the amount of taxation one of these small farmers paid in Ireland through this tax. It had been said that these men need not consume so much as they do. The complete answer to that was this: If such an argument.

was to be accepted no tax need press upon them, because whatever was taxed they could do without. It was notorious, that the habits of the people were such that tens of thousands of poor men who were utterly unable, even when in work and in good years, to afford for themselves and their families a sufficient supply of decent food, would still indulge in their allowance of tobacco. It was the duty of a statesman to arrange the taxes of the country, but he was not entitled to look into the habits of the people in that critical way, and to say that they could escape taxation if they would only cease consuming so much of the article. It must be admitted that no tax weighed so heavily on the poorer classes of the community in the United Kingdom, especially in Ireland, as the tobacco tax, and it was for that reason that he objected to this change of policy on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was said that this was a temporary increase, but he was greatly afraid, in view of the enormous pressure brought to bear on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was asked for the withdrawal of the increase, it might be many years before they could extract it from him again. The Chancellor of the Exchequer last year or the year before, when asked to reimpose this tax, said it was undesirable to be continually disturbing the trade. It was a trade which took a considerable time to adjust itself to any alteration of taxation on the raw material of the manufacturer. When they altered the tea duty they did not affect the trade so much. When they made a change like this it could not be immediately expressed in the price of an ounce of tobacco to the consumer. When they made a change of that kind they disturbed the trade. From the point of justice to the working classes of this country, and to the Irish people, looking to their special financial grievance, it was peculiarly unfortunate that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had decided to increase the tobacco tax. His attitude regarding the war had been fully expressed already. It was, of course, a great additional bitterness to have this tax imposed in Ireland, and to be compelled to pay money the people could ill afford for a war which they condemned as cruel and unjust.

MR. DALY said, if once this tax was imposed, it was very doubtful whether it would ever be removed again. The hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne, in a speech which he made on an Amendment to the Address, condemned the Government for reducing the tobacco tax two years ago. When statements of that kind came from thick and thin supporters of the Government, it would be very difficult for the Chancellor of the Exchequer at any future date to reduce the tax. Some of the Jingo papers next morning referred to the statement, and commended the hon. and gallant Member for striking the right note. He felt that in making this protest the Members from Ireland were acting on behalf of the poor people of that country. Tea and tobacco were commodities which were used by nearly every poor man in Ireland, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do a gracious act, which would be hailed with delight by the people of Ireland, if he would omit this clause. This tax of fourpence per pound on tobacco would strike much harder on the poor than a sixpenny tax on cigars. To a man who smoked cigars he believed double the tax would not be so much as one penny on the tobacco of the poor man. If double were put on cigars it would please the people of the country much better, and it would show that the right hon. Gentleman was discriminating more between the poor and the rich.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) said the increase of fourpence per pound on the tobacco tax was likely to cause a severe strain on the Irish taxpayer. From the Report for the year 1896-97 he found that the duty paid by Ireland on tobacco was £1,227,000. That was an extraordinary amount of money for a poor country like Ireland to be compelled to contribute—not for the price of the article, but for duty on the article. The people of Ireland found that the longer they continued attached to this vast Empire, the greater was the amount of money they were compelled to pay. Tobacco, like tea, was one of the pleasures of the poor people of Ireland, and they felt it was a great grievance to be taxed upon that commodity for the purpose of filling the war chest. People would be asked to pay the tax who did not approve of the war. He admitted that smoking was a pleasure, but it was not so expensive a pleasure as some gentlemen in this country indulged in when they smoked

a 1s. 6d. cigar, or drank champagne at 7s. 6d. a bottle. Amongst the working classes in Ireland a cigar was an unknown enjoyment. He considered therefore that sixpence per pound on the duty on cigars was altogether out of proportion to the fourpence per pound on common tobacco. While they knew that their protest would not prevent the imposition of the duty, they felt nevertheless that it was their duty to stand up and make the protest. The tobacco duties in Ireland would average 5s. 5d. per head per annum, and when he remembered that the country was not able to afford the taxation, he considered that by every fair means and every reasonable means—[laughter]—Yes, he said reasonable means when experts in the Royal Commission had adjudged this country the guilty party. They had been tried by their own court and jury, and now they refused to give Ireland the benefit of the verdict. He thought the representatives of Ireland were simply doing their duty in refusing to support additional taxation on any enjoyment of the people in order to pay for an unjust war.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.) said smoking tobacco was a consolation to the poor people of Ireland, but it would not add to their consolation to remember that the smoke they took would contribute so much to the cost of a war which they heartily condemned. For that reason he associated himself with the protest that had been made. It might be considered that this was a tax that the Irish people could easily get rid of, but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew the long confirmed habits of the people, which were not likely to be altered on account of the tax, he would not have included the tobacco tax in his Budget. He was not a smoker himself, but he could understand how the poor people would feel this tax most severely. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had already refused to alter his proposal with regard to tea, but he would do well if he could make an exception in the case of the tobacco tax.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 179; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 83.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baird, John Geo. Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Man.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Br'tol
Bethell, Commander
Billson, Alfred
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worcester
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chath'm
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G. J. (St George's
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grey, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hamilton. Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Hardy, Laurence
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn. Sir U
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lambert, George
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn

Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt Hon Walter (Liverpool
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (Bute
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Penn, John
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Round, James
Samuel, J. Stockton-on-Tees)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt.
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M A (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M, Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Morris, Samuel
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Wilson, Fredk. W. (Norfolk)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Clause 3.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again." (*Mr. William Redmond.*)—Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

BOILERS REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION.

Committee appointed to consider and report on the advisability of legislation to ensure the systematic and regular inspection and certification of boilers, with the object of diminishing the risk to life and property arising from boiler explosions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Carew, and Mr. Clancy.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Merchant Shipping Acts," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 4th April, and to be printed. [Bill 145.]

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve of the Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 27th March, 1900.

ROYAL ASSENT.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent—

1. War Loan.
2. Consolidated Fund (No. 2).
3. Census (Great Britain).

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BARRY RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

FALKIRK AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

CLEETHORPES GAS BILL [H.L.]

Reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Reported with amendments.

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [H.L.].

Reported with an amendment.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILL [H.L.].

GOVERNMENTS STOCK AND OTHER SECURITIES INVESTMENT COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

HAMILTON BURGH BILL.

Brought from Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

LEE CONSERVANCY BILL.

Message from the Commons for leave for the Lord Russell of Killowen to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee of that House; leave given for his Lordship to attend if he think fit, and his Lordship consenting thereto, a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 2391. Texas.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT).

Return of prices of Irish agricultural produce for the years 1881 to 1899 inclusive.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS).

Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Holborn, St. Pancras, and Stepney, and incorporating the councils thereof and for other purposes connected therewith. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 36.)

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further amendments. The Report of the amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 39.)

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [H.L.]. [THIRD READING.]

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, in asking your Lordships' assent to the Third Reading of this Bill I wish to mention that I have received a great many communications, nearly all of a favourable character, with respect to the details of the Bill. This morning I received a communication from a very influential body, the Chairmen and Deputy-Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, who have been good enough to consider the measure and to pass a resolution in

favour of its provisions. They, however, suggested an Amendment, and, as it will doubtless appear in the press, I think it as well to state the reasons why I cannot agree to the Amendment they propose. The effect of the Amendment, getting rid of the technicality of it, would be that magistrates would have power, in any case they thought fit, not to impose a fine, but, in substitution of a fine, to direct that the youthful offender should be whipped. As your Lordships are aware, the Bill, as at present drawn, only gives the power of imposing the punishment of whipping in lieu of imprisonment, and in cases where a fine has been inflicted but not paid. To accept such an Amendment as the one proposed would be to go beyond the intentions of those who introduced the Bill, and certainly beyond its object. The only object of the Bill is to keep youthful offenders out of prison, and to substitute for imprisonment the minor punishment and lesser degradation of whipping. The desire of the influential body to whom I have referred is to substitute whipping for the lesser degradation of a fine. Take, for instance, an offence under a bye-law—a very venial offence such as obstructing the highway, or playing a boyish game in the highway and breaking a window. The proposed Amendment would give the magistrates the power of over-riding the intention of the Legislature, and of substituting whipping for an offence which the Legislature intended should be met by a fine. That will not result in keeping a child out of prison. I do not wish to call into existence the somewhat irate magistrate to whom the noble Earl opposite referred, who would impose a severe penalty out of prejudice, but I do conceive that there will be magistrates who will say, "We will take this matter into our own hands, and, instead of imposing a fine of one shilling or two shillings as the case may be, we will, without giving the offender a chance of paying a fine, impose the punishment of whipping." That would be going beyond the object of the Bill, and I think it would result in the Bill being regarded as so harsh that its passing would be imperilled. I have also consulted the Home Office, who advise that it would not be well to accept this Amendment. I am not, of course, going to refer to the general subject of the Bill, as that matter has been already discussed; but, as I have said, I have received a great many communications in support of the Bill, and only yesterday I received one which, with your Lordships' permission, I will read to the House. It is from the stipendiary magistrate of Manchester, who has had great experience in this matter, and who gives an instance of exactly the class of case with which this Bill will, I think, rightly deal. He says—

"I sincerely hope the Bill will pass. If those who oppose whipping for boys knew the impotency of magistrates who, like myself, will not send mere children to prison, to deal with numerous offences I think they would hesitate to oppose the Bill. May I, at the risk of wearying you, give one instance? This court deals with the suburbs of Manchester and Salford, parts of which consist of farms and market gardens. Every summer the farmers and others suffer hundreds of pounds worth of damage from boys from 10 to 16 years of age, who come out of the town, pull down their fences, uproot their turnips and potatoes, and play hide and seek with their standing crops, and they literally have no remedy. The boys have no money to pay fines, their parents will not pay a fine, and they are too young for prison. Extra police are drafted to protect the fields, and the farmer and his servants spend Sunday in watching them, but cannot protect them. The Bill will, I feel sure, put a stop to these practices.

I have nothing more to say with reference to the provisions of the Bill. There is an Amendment standing in the name of Lord Monkswell, and if the noble Lord will move his Amendment after the Third Reading I will state the view we take with regard to it.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Lord James of Hereford.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I entirely concur with the objection which the noble and learned Lord has raised to the proposed Amendment, which seems to me to be outside the scope of the Bill. As my noble friend has repeatedly explained, the object of the Bill is to prevent the sending of children to prison by substituting the punishment of whipping; and it would be going altogether beyond the intentions of the Bill to substitute whipping for fines in cases where children were not liable, under the existing law, to be sent to prison. The Amendment would, for that reason, be very objectionable, and I am glad the noble and learned Lord does not accept it.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS): My Lords, I think, as Chairman of the Association of Chairmen and Deputy-Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, that there is a good deal to be said in favour of what has fallen from my noble and learned friend against the proposed Amendment; indeed, I believe that if the question had been thoroughly argued out at the meeting of the Association the Amendment would not have been pressed. I might, however, say, on behalf of the Association, that according to the Bill magistrates may whip instead of committing to prison for the non-payment of a fine; therefore, the Amendment does not seem to go very much further than the Bill. The Association is composed of persons who have been for a series of years engaged in the administration of the criminal law, and their absolutely unanimous opinion, after considerable discussion on the whole matter, was that it would be of the greatest possible advantage, not only to the community, but to youthful offenders themselves, that the latter should not be sent to prison if whipping would suffice.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, it does seem strange to me that we should find any difficulty whatever in making use of the very ordinary and suitable punishment of whipping for youthful offenders. I am perfectly astonished at the objections which have been raised to it, and I should be very sorry if what the noble Earl opposite said the other day should have any weight in the country and lead the class on whose behalf he spoke to think that there was any degradation in such a punishment. They should be made to feel that the degradation lies in turning their children out into the streets to earn their livelihood by thieving, and in that way making castigation necessary. That constitutes the degradation, not the punishment; and I think the noble Lord's remarks upon the subject, so far as they will have any influence in the country, will be most injurious. I do not think anyone can doubt the efficacy of the punishment of whipping, and the suitability of it in the case of young children. When noble Lords speak of the degradation of whipping they remind me of a remark which Lord Beaconsfield made in this House when we were discussing the abolition of flogging in the Army. He said—

"The objections made to this punishment, that punishment, and every punishment amount to this, that crime has gradually vindicated its own impunity."

I hope that feeling will not have any weight with your Lordships, and that you will not stand in the way of this Bill passing as it is. We all agree that young children should not be sent to prison, and if it is not possible to inflict the punishment of whipping, what other alternative is there? Whipping is the simplest, shortest, and, as we know by experience, the most effective punishment in suitable cases, and I fail to see that there is any degradation in whipping children guilty of the offences for which it is here intended. In fact, the punishment of whipping has really become the sole remaining privileges of the aristocracy. I am glad that the suggested Amendment finds no favour with your Lordships. There is no other punishment for boys who commit offences for which they are now liable to be sent to prison. We have, therefore, only to choose, if we object to sending them to prison, between the punishment of whipping and impunity, and I do not think anyone will say that the punishment of whipping is so unsuitable that it would be better that such child should go unpunished.

On Question agreed to; Bill read 3[a], accordingly.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I moved in the Standing Committee a new clause at the end of Clause 7, with the object of correcting what seems to be an obvious and iniquitous blunder in the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act, 1894. That Act gives the managers of industrial schools powers, which they are bound to exercise, of supervision over children from the ages of 16 to 18 after the term of detention has expired. In order that the managers may have a greater power over the child they are allowed, under certain conditions, if they consider it for the benefit of the child, to recall it to the school for a period of not more than three months, the period of detention having already expired. This clause is drafted in such an extraordinary way as to only give the power of recall to managers when the children happen to be out on licence. If a child is working on its own account, whether a boy or a girl, that child is not

liable to be recalled. No doubt, in a roundabout way the child might be recalled, for if you find a child wandering about you could always go to some person and ask him to accept a licence formally, and having gone through that process you could, in the course of time, recall the child to the school. I know that the noble and learned Lord opposite is very sympathetic in regard to this Amendment, and when I stated the case to the Standing Committee as I have stated it to your Lordships there was not a dissentient voice as to the desirability and even the necessity of altering the law in the direction I have indicated. The noble and learned Lord took objection to my Amendment on two grounds: first, that it was not germane to the Bill, as industrial school children were not, technically speaking, youthful offenders. I will not argue that point, but this Bill does make certain amendments in the principal Act of 1866 which are absolutely on all fours with the proposal I have to submit. The proposal in Clause 5 of this Bill is that certain children who are not liable to be committed to an industrial school shall be liable in future to be so committed.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: You are referring to Clause 6.

LORD MONKSWELL: No, I am referring to Clause 5, which is as follows—

"A Court of Assize or Quarter Sessions may exercise the like power of committing a child to an industrial school as may be exercised by two justices under Section 15 of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866, and the provisions of that Act shall be construed accordingly."

Clause 6, no doubt, also deals with matters connected with reformatories and industrial schools. I do not propose to interfere in any way with the internal management of industrial schools. All my clause proposes is to make children liable to be recalled to the school who are not now liable to be recalled. It has been suggested that the clause in the Act of 1894 was carefully considered at the time, and was not a blunder; but let us consider what may happen under the clause as it at present stands. I admit that on this point my reading of the law is different from that of the noble and learned Lord, and I daresay it is not the reading of the law which will commend itself to this House, but, at all events, I will submit my argument. I say that, under this clause of the Act of 1894, if a girl is licensed out—and the license must be to some person, and not to a particular employment—and if the mistress of that girl dies, there is, at all events, very great doubt whether she can be recalled to the school without undergoing the cumbersome process to which I have alluded, and if it is necessary to recall a girl at all it would be in such a case as that. It is monstrous and intolerable that where a child is particularly liable to be led astray, having no one to look after her, the power of recall vested in the managers should cease. I believe the only objection to my Amendment is that it may lead to further Amendments and may wreck the Bill when it gets to another place; but I should have thought that it would be clear that the object of my Amendment was to correct what was an absolute blunder in the Act of 1894, and that it could not lead to any Amendments which would deal with the internal management of industrial schools. It would appear to me that the noble and learned Lord, though he accepted my Amendment, would be perfectly justified in refusing to accept any Amendment which would deal with the internal management of industrial schools. I will not press my Amendment if the noble Lord will give me, as I believe he will, an undertaking that the matter shall be very carefully considered when the Bill goes down to another place.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, at the end of Clause 7, to insert, as a new clause, 'The power of recalling a child to an industrial school while under the supervision of the managers conferred by the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act, 1894, shall be exerciseable in respect of every such child, whether licensed to employment or not.'"—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My noble friend, I am sure, has convinced your Lordships that this is a very technical point, and, as he says, there is a difference of opinion as to the construction of the Act of 1894. Personally, I think that the blot which he says exists in the Act of 1894 does not exist, and that there is this power to recall a child if the licence passes away from circumstances such as the death of the person to whom the child has been entrusted. No doubt the object of my noble friend is a very good one—

namely, to continue some control over the child; but I have considered this matter and have come to the conclusion that his Amendment does deal with the management of the child after it has entered the school. Therefore, I fear that if we allowed this Amendment it would be an admission that that subject could be dealt upon in another place, and it would be sought, under the cloak of this Amendment, to reopen the question of industrial schools. I am sure that such a course would hinder and endanger the progress of the Bill. I am able to give my noble friend the assurance, which I hope will satisfy him, that the Bill will be in charge of the Secretary of State for the Home Department in the House of Commons, and I am also in a position to inform him that the question will be considered without starting with any hostile feeling towards the Amendment, and that if effect can be given to his object without interfering in any way with the Bill's prospects of success that will be done. I hope the limited assurance I have given my noble friend will be accepted by him.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

MILITIA AND MILITIA RESERVE STATISTICS.

LORD RAGLAN: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government how many Militia there are in the United Kingdom at the present time, how many of these are Militia Reserve belonging to regiments that have a battalion or battalions in South Africa, and how many are recruits who have not served a training. My object in asking the second question is that Militia Reserve men are practically ear-marked for South Africa. They will, in all probability, go out in a short space of time, and will, therefore, sooner or later, cease to be available for home defence.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the number of Militia in the United Kingdom at the present time is altogether 82,560; that number includes the permanent staff and officers. Of that number 11,320 are men belonging to the Militia Reserve of regiments having a battalion or battalions in South Africa. The number of men included in the grand total who have not served a training is 16,524, but although these men have not gone through a training in the usual sense of the word it would be hardly fair to describe them as untrained men, because a great number of them belong to Militia battalions which have for some time past been embodied at home, and it is obvious that the men of a battalion which has been for some weeks or months embodied have undergone a very considerable amount of training. It may interest the noble Lord to know that of the 39 Militia battalions embodied at home at this moment 22 have now been embodied for three months, 13 for two months, and 4 for one month, and the whole of the men belonging to those 39 battalions may fairly be considered to have undergone a considerable amount of military training.

LORD RAGLAN: Will the noble Marquess state whether recruiting for the Militia is proceeding satisfactorily?

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I have no very recent information, but my information, such as it is, goes to show that the recruiting for the Militia is proceeding fairly well.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

First Report from the Select Committee considered (according to order), and agreed to.

House adjourned at Five of the clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 27th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are

applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Donegal Railway Bill [Lords].
Lancashire Inebriates Acts Board Bill [Lords].
Otley Urban District Council Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

GRANTHAM GAS BILL.

REDHILL GAS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

HARTLEPOOL GAS AND WATER BILL.
WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

SOUTHPORT EXTENSION AND TRAMWAYS BILL [BY ORDER].

Order for consideration of Bill, as amended, read.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): It is not my desire to press my opposition to progress being made with this and the Stockport Bill. My object in putting down notice of opposition was simply to induce the promoters to insert the model clause which I hope will be put in all these Bills in the future, and I am glad to say that they have agreed to do so at a later stage.

Bill ordered to be read the third time.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Mr. LOUGH: The Instruction which I have placed on the Paper is similar to that which has already been accepted by the House with regard to other Bills of a like character. I think it is more important than usual in the case of this Bill, the object of which is to construct tramways in various London suburbs. The promoters state that they have no objection, and I therefore hope the House will unanimously carry my Instruction.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee on the London United Tramways Bill, to consider whether it is desirable to introduce into the Bill provisions to secure cheap fares for the labouring classes, and whether amendments should be made in the clauses with this object in the original Acts of the company in respect to the number of cars run, the hours at which the cars are run, the maximum and minimum fares charged, and whether penalties should be inserted to secure the objects of the clauses.—(*Mr. Lough.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2).

Bill to confirm two Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Fethard and Skibbereen, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Gerald Balfour.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Accrington, Chipping Norton, Gosport and Alverstoke, Kingswinford (Rural), Newport Pagnell, and Wirral (Rural), ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To confirm two Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Fethard and Skibbereen," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 147.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Accrington, Chipping Norton, Gosport, and Alverstoke, Kingswinford (Rural), Newport Pagnell, and Wirrall (Rural)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 148.]

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went, and being returned,

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to:—

1. War Loan Act, 1900.
2. Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Act, 1900.
3. Census (Great Britain) Act, 1900.

PETITIONS.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table.

DISTRESS ABOLITION AND SUBSTITUTION BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh and Leith, against; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Kinlet; and Highley; to lie upon the Table.

OCCUPYING TENANTS' ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield; Newcastle on Tyne; Hartlepool (two); Hazelrigg; Preston; Padgate (two); Pendlebury; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (fourteen); and Exeter; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sussex; and York (two); to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Two Petitions from Clydebank, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL AND SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition from Bolton (Lanc.), in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from York (two); and Pendlebury (two); to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kilmarnock, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) AMENDMENT (No. 3) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S HOUSES TENURE BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1899-1900).

Paper [presented 26th March] to be printed. [No. 110.]

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS).

Copy presented,—of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Holborn, St. Pancras, and Stepney, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, — of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2391 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Committee; "That, in the case of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

Resolution agreed to.

INEBRIATES AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 149.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: — Sir William Houldsworth, Sir John Colomb, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Baird; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. J. W. Wilson (Worcestershire, North), Captain Pretyman, Sir Charles Welby, and Lord Dalkeith.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A.).

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills, That Colonel Blundell, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print, and circulate with the Votes, the Minutes of their Proceedings and any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. Lawrence Hardy.*)

WIDNES AND RUNCORN BRIDGE BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TREATMENT OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS.

SIR JOHN DORINGTON (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War who is responsible for sending, on 5th January last, nine men of the Gloucester Regiment, recovering from wounds, from Netley Hospital to Aldershot without any notice to any officer there that the men were coming; also, for directing the men on arrival to report themselves to the 2nd Battalion Gloucester Regiment, which had gone to South Africa some time previously, so that on their arrival in the evening, there were no quarters, bedding, or rations for them until they found accommodation with the 4th West York Regiment, with whom were some details left behind by the Gloucester Regiment, and who shared their food and bedding with them; will he explain why these men who were recommended by the hospital authorities to have two months furlough to recover their health were, after a few days spent at Aldershot, sent in the clothes which they had worn on their journey from Africa, plus some civilian coats given them at Netley, to the Militia battalion of their regiment stationed at Athlone, where they were re-clothed and then allowed at their own expense to return to England on fur-

lough; and whether some other system could be concerted between the hospital authorities and the military authorities for the treatment of convalescents from South Africa on discharge from hospital than was adopted in this case.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Some difficulty has occurred in the investigation of this case because many of the persons concerned have gone to South Africa. Due notice was sent from Netley of the arrival of these men, but the notice appears not to have been received at Aldershot. The detachment of the 2nd Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment left at Aldershot was attached to the 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, and it was therefore quite proper that the 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment should provide accommodation for the men coming from Netley. The officer commanding the detachment of the 2nd Gloucestershire Regiment acted wrongly in sending these men to Athlone. He is an officer called up for duty from the Militia, and therefore inexperienced; but he will be reprimanded. A change of system is about to be introduced by which men will be sent on sick furlough direct from hospital to their homes at Government expense instead of being sent to their regiments. This concession will, at some expense to Government, simplify the arrangements for sick furloughs; but it is the opinion of the Secretary of State that the system at present in force would have sufficiently provided for the case of these men, if all concerned had acted with due zeal and discretion.

*In reply to a further question, Mr. WYNDHAM said such an event was not likely to occur again.

SIEGE OF KIMBERLEY—MR. RHODES AND COLONEL KEKEWICH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, on the 10th February, 1900, Major O'Meara, military censor, during the siege of Kimberley, sent a letter to the editor of the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, a paper under the control of Mr. Rhodes, apprising the editor that he had on two occasions printed articles on the military situation injurious to the interest of the Army and defence of the town, and had committed serious offences dealt with by the Army Act, and informing the editor that proofs of the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* must be submitted to the censor before publication; whether he is aware that, in consequence of this letter, the publication of the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* was suspended; whether, after the raising of the siege of Kimberley, Mr. Rhodes, in the presence of General French and of Colonel Kekewich, took on himself the responsibility of these articles, and ordered Colonel Kekewich out of his house when this interview took place; and what notice, if any, is it intended to take of this matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: No official information of the matters referred to in the question has reached the War Office. If any action is necessary in the matter, the Secretary of State has no doubt that Lord Roberts will take it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will an inquiry be made into these allegations?

MR WYNDHAM: The Secretary of State has the fullest confidence in the discretion of Lord Roberts, and does not think it necessary that his action should be constantly aided by suggestions from home.

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENT — LORD METHUEN AND GENERAL WAUCHOPE.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the authorities at the War Office will ask Lord Methuen whether the late Major General Wauchope expressed his concurrence in the likelihood of success in the contemplated operations of the battle of Magersfontein, or expressed his divergence in view from Lord Methuen with reference to the wisdom of these operations.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. It would be entirely contrary to military custom and discipline to ask a general in command of a force whether his plan of operations was concurred in by his subordinate officer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that a statement was openly made that General Wauchope disapproved of the plans, and that his dying words were that he was not to blame?

[No answer was given.]

COMFORTS FOR THE TROOPS.

MR. NEWDIGATE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that many of the troops serving in Natal have not yet received comforts sent them from this country months ago, and what is the reason of the delay; and whether he is aware that members of the Naval Brigade serving on H.M.S. "Terrible," which has recently been transferred from Natal to the Chinese station, have hitherto received none of the comforts sent them from home, and whether he will take steps to have these comforts forwarded on to them.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must refer my hon. friend to my reply to a question put by the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent on the 16th inst.* I have received a letter from Mr. Gatliff, in which he informs me that he has been actively engaged in expediting this matter in Natal.

WARM CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War is the War Office supplying the troops in South Africa with flannel shirts and warm underclothing for the coming winter there, and are thick uniforms for winter work being supplied.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir.

IRISH FINANCIAL RELATIONS—GOVERNMENT STORES—COMPARATIVE OUTLAY IN THE THREE KINGDOMS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state the amount expended on military and naval stores bought in Great Britain for the last twelve months and the amount expended in Ireland in the same way for a similar period.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): I must refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave to him on the 15th instant.†

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: In view of the fact that the amount expended in Ireland has been given, cannot the figures for the rest of the United Kingdom be presented?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: It would involve a long and complicated inquiry, which the Department cannot undertake at present.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—SHIRTS.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether any orders for shirts, and, if so, to what amount, have been placed with the wholesale houses in Londonderry.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone this question.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Is the hon. Member prepared to give a Return showing the amount of stores ordered in every town in the British islands?

[No answer was given.]

MILITIA REGIMENTAL SERGEANT-MAJORS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the regimental sergeant-major of a Militia regiment sent to South Africa has the same duties to perform as the regimental sergeant-major of a Line battalion; how many Militia battalions have been sent to the seat of war, and whether their regimental sergeant-majors have previously been in the regulars; whether the regimental sergeant-major of a Line battalion is not a warrant officer with pay and allowances as such; and whether the regimental sergeant-majors of the Militia will be placed upon the same footing.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. Thirty Militia battalions have been sent to South Africa; their sergeant-majors have previously held lower rank in the Regular forces. The regimental sergeant-major of a Line battalion is a warrant officer with pay and allowance as such; the Militia sergeant-majors are on embodiment put on the same footing as

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 1064.

† See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 914.

regards pay and allowances, but their normal duties are not such as to justify the grant of permanent warrant rank.

FLOGGING IN MILITARY PRISONS.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State of War whether the rules in regard to flogging for offences committed in military prisons have been modified; and if so, to what extent since the rules were amended in 1898 in regard to flogging for offences committed in civil prisons.

MR. WYNDHAM: The military rules were amended by Army Order 156, of November, 1898, and brought in accordance with the Prison Act, 1898, Section 5. There has been no further Amendment. The new rules were presented to the House on the 8th February, 1899.

ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS.

MR. WARNER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how soon will some scheme of what is going to be done with the Royal Reserve battalions, Militia embodied in May and other Reserves be made, and when will it be made public so that officers and non-commissioned officers may know what arrangements to make for their wives and families.

MR. WYNDHAM: The scheme will be made public as soon as it is sufficiently complete.

WITHINGTON RIFLE RANGE.

MR. WARNER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if it is the intention of the War Office to proceed at once with the construction of the Withington rifle range, and what are the causes now delaying its construction.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Bill to confirm the Provisional Order for the acquisition of the land is down for Second Reading in the House of Lords to-day. As soon as the Bill has received the Royal Assent the construction of the range will be commenced.

ROYAL ARTILLERY—SERVICE QUALIFICATION FOR PROMOTION.

MR. NEWDIGATE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that in the infantry and cavalry second lieutenants are promoted to fill vacancies irrespective of their service, and, seeing that about ninety lieutenants of the Royal Artillery have been promoted to the rank of captain in the Horse and Field List during the present year, the rule that second lieutenants of the Royal Artillery can in no case receive promotion until they have served for three years in that rank may be reconsidered.

MR. WYNDHAM: The abnormal rapidity of promotion in Line regiments to the rank of lieutenant has drawn attention to the rate of promotion to that rank in the Artillery and Engineers. It is impossible to secure uniformity of promotion in the various units of the service, but the Secretary of State is considering whether promotion to the rank of lieutenant in the Artillery and Engineers should not at the present time be somewhat accelerated.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL—DISCHARGE OF ENGINEERS.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, in view of the fact that some thirty working engineers were engaged at Woolwich four weeks ago to work in the Dial Square Department, many of whom came from distant parts of the country, at their own expense, upon the prospect of permanent Government employment, and have now received notice of discharge on the ground that material is not ready, whether he can see his way to reconsider the discharge of these men, and, until the delaved material is ready, find them employment in other departments in which overtime is now being worked to a large extent by men of the same trade as those who are being discharged.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Thirty men were taken on about a month ago for temporary employment. They were distinctly warned at the time that their employment was only temporary. They are still at work, and have not received notice of discharge. There has been no want of or delay in supplies of material.

ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS — ARMOUR PLATES.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admi-

ralty if he will state the amount expended in England and Scotland respectively for armour plates during the current financial year.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The amount expended for armour in England and Scotland respectively during the current financial year, so far as brought to account up to date, is £1,425,916 and £148,665. There is only one firm in Scotland which supplies armour, and that firm has received orders in excess of their rate of production.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): What amount has been spent in Ireland in this connection?

MR. GOSCHEN: I believe there is no armour plate manufactured in Ireland.

INDIAN FAMINE—AMERICAN RELIEF CONTRIBUTIONS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Lord Curzon has announced that American contributions for the relief of the famine in India would be thankfully received; and whether it is the intention of the Imperial Government to contribute any sum for the same purpose.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have no information from Lord Curzon to the effect suggested, but I have seen a short statement in the newspapers upon the subject, which I have no doubt is correct. These private contributions are not paid to Government, nor used so as to reduce the sums expended by Government upon relief of distress, or to cover in any way the work undertaken by Government. The money so collected is applied to certain defined purposes outside the sphere of Government operations, and its application is superintended by local committees of private individuals, but who work in co-operation with the Government authorities.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the Government consider the desirability of making a grant from Imperial funds towards the relief of the sufferers, seeing that the distress is so great that even private persons in America feel it a duty to subscribe?

LORD G. HAMILTON: If the hon. Member had listened to my answer, he would have heard me say that these private subscriptions are for purposes outside the sphere of Government operations.

MR. FLAVIN: Stop the war.

HEATING ARRANGEMENTS IN SCHOOLS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what arrangements are made in England in the case of voluntary schools, where education is free, for heating the schools in winter, and out of what fund the cost of heating is provided.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): Schools are heated by the managers out of the school funds.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether the duties appertaining to the office of Judge Advocate General, whose holder has hitherto been a Minister of the Crown, are now discharged by a member of the High Court of Justice who gets no salary for the discharge of those duties, and is removed from the scope of Parliamentary criticism except in peculiar circumstances directly appertaining to the discharge of his judicial functions; and whether there is any, and, if so, what method whereby the exercise of the functions of the office of Judge Advocate General and the disposal of the patronage attaching to that office can be submitted to the consideration of the House of Commons.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In my opinion the first paragraph of the hon. and learned Member's question does not give a correct description of the conditions under which the duties of the office of Judge Advocate General are now being discharged. The resources of civilisation at the disposal of the hon. and learned Member will, I think, suggest to him a method of bringing the circumstances of any case to which he desires to direct attention before the House of Commons.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But Sir Francis Jeune being a member of the

High Court of Justice, how can we impugn his action?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: There are many methods by which the hon. Member can draw attention to particular cases if he is not satisfied with the decision arrived at.

COMMITTALS FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether he is aware that the Lord Chief Justice of England, in delivering judgment in the Queen's Bench Division in the case of Payne *v.* Cooper, in April, 1896, stated that applications for committal for contempt of court had been much too numerous, and that in some instances the decisions had gone too far; and that Mr. Justice Wright, his Lordship's colleague on the bench, expressed his concurrence in these remarks; and whether, having regard to the fact that so far back as 1882 legislation on the subject of committal for contempt of court was announced as a Government measure, and that the power of committal for contempt of court is not subject to appeal or supervision, and is uncontrolled by the prerogative of pardon, the Government will take into consideration the propriety at an early date of proposing legislation with a view to the definition and limitation of this power.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The answer to the first paragraph of the hon. and learned Member's question is in the affirmative. The rules which govern questions of contempt of court are well understood, and there is not, in my opinion, any necessity for legislation.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR VAGRANTS.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of cases in which prisoners have been sentenced to corporal punishment for offences under the Vagrancy Acts during the last five years.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The figures are: –1895, 1; 1896, 3; 1897, 1; and 1898, 1. Those for 1899 have not yet been abstracted.

FLANNEN ISLANDS LIGHTHOUSE.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether the works in connection with the construction of the lighthouse on the Flannen Islands have yet been completed; and, if not, will he say what progress has been made.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that the light at Flannen Islands was exhibited last December. The only work remaining to be done is the completion of the landing places.

RAILWAY COUPLINGS—ACCIDENTS AT MANCHESTER.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the case of a capstanman at the Great Northern Goods Station, Deansgate, Manchester, who on 3rd instant was crushed when passing betwixt the buffers of two wagons, with the object of coupling them, and was so injured that he died shortly after his arrival at the hospital, and to the case of a goods porter at the Great Central Railway, Ardwick, Manchester, who attempted on the 7th instant to put the brake down on a wagon of the London and North Western Railway Company when, owing to a defective brake, he slipped and fell in front of the next wagon, receiving such injuries that he only lived a few hours after reaching the infirmary; and whether in view of the frequency of such accidents as those mentioned, he will push on with urgency his Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill, which will greatly tend to diminish their number.

MR. RITCHIE: The two unfortunate accidents referred to were duly notified to the Department, and in the latter case an inquiry will be held.

LIGHTHOUSES—THE MANACLES ROCK.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the serious shipping disasters that have occurred off the south coast of Cornwall in consequence of the want of a lightship or lighthouse to warn

mariners off the Manacles Rock; and whether he will take steps to communicate with the Corporation of Trinity House, with a view to having this dangerous part of the coast lighted by a lightship or lighthouse for the purpose of warning mariners of the danger.

MR. RITCHIE: My attention has from time to time been called to disasters that have occurred in the neighbourhood of the Manacles. The Trinity House, as the general lighthouse authority, are responsible for the lighting of the coast, and the Board of Trade have not received from them any application for sanction to the necessary expenditure for the establishment of a lighthouse or light vessel near the Manacles.

AUCTIONEERS' LICENCES.

MR. ROTHSCHILD (Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of auctioneers having to take out a licence, there is any control on the part of the Department; and if there is any method, other than by a legal action, of getting a licence rescinded on account of malpractices or of opposing a renewal of any such licence.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Board of Inland Revenue have no power to refuse to grant an auctioneer's licence when applied for or to rescind one after it has been granted. It is not necessary, as in the case of retailers of intoxicating liquors, for an auctioneer to obtain a magistrate's certificate before applying for an excise licence; and licensed auctioneers are under no control so far as that Department is concerned.

LIVERPOOL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether in view of the small number of supervising officers in the telegraph branch of the post office at Liverpool, and of the amount of supervisory work being performed by senior clerks, it is the Postmaster General's intention to issue a revision of duties in that office.

MR. HANBURY: A revision of the telegraph indoor establishment of the post office at Liverpool is under consideration in connection with the removal to the new post office.

POST OFFICE CYCLES—ORDERS TO IRISH MANUFACTURERS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any share of orders for cycles for the Post Office service has been given to Irish firms.

MR. HANBURY: Yes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: To what extent?

MR. HANBURY: About a dozen bicycles have been purchased in Ireland from various firms, and one firm applied to be allowed to tender for a portion of recent orders. In reply to an invitation last year this firm declined to tender owing to pressure of work, but asked to be again invited this season. They will accordingly be asked to tender when the next supply is required.

SUB-POSTMASTERS AND SUPERANNUATION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether sub-postmasters are entitled to superannuation on retirement; and, if so, under what conditions and under what Act.

MR. HANBURY: Sub-postmasters are eligible for superannuation under the Superannuation Act of 1859, provided they hold a Civil Service certificate and their duties are such as necessarily to occupy their whole time.

WORKING CLASS DWELLINGS IN EAST LONDON.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether consent has been given to the scheme of the Whitechapel and Bow Railway Company to erect dwellings for working class occupiers displaced from Whitechapel and along the projected route of the railway in the residential districts of the Wellington Road, the Mornington Road, and Bow Road; whether the local authorities have been consulted in the matter; and if he will now cause an inquiry to be held as to the possibility of the railway company acquiring an alternative site.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: The scheme in question has been provisionally, but not yet formally, approved. The second and third paragraphs seem to raise points which do not fall within the scope of my duties in the matter.

MR. FLOWER: Is it not possible for the right hon. Gentleman to consult the local authorities?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I apprehend that the duty of the Secretary of State is to see that the site proposed is a suitable one for the class of dwellings to be erected.

THEATRE REGULATIONS—BLOCKING OF GANGWAYS.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there are any officers directly responsible for the effective carrying out of the instructions to theatrical managers against the blocking of gangways and the overcrowding of seats.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I am informed that officers of the London County Council inspect theatres and other places of amusement with the object indicated in the question, and when they find irregularities in a theatre under the control of the Lord Chamberlain they report to that official.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH—DISTURBANCE AT A TEMPERANCE MEETING AT WORKSOP.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has had any report from Worksop in connection with a statement which has appeared to the effect that a local Wesleyan schoolmaster who had been accused of holding pro-Boer opinions was assailed while presiding at a temperance meeting, and followed to his home by a crowd pelting him with stones, eggs, and earth; whether the same course was adopted towards him on the following evening when leaving his school; and whether, if this be so, he will satisfy himself that there is a sufficient force of police at Worksop for the preservation of the public peace and the defence of unpopular individuals.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I cannot but express my regret that a temperance meeting was disturbed because the chairman is believed to hold unpopular views about the war; but having made inquiry I find no reason to doubt that the police performed their duty in affording adequate protection—more, in fact, than was asked for—and that sufficient precautions were and are being taken to prevent a renewal of the disturbance. I may add that Mr. Roberts, the schoolmaster, did not sustain any injury on either occasion.

SCOTTISH FISHERIES—CONVICTIONS FOR ILLEGAL TRAWLING.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state how many convictions were obtained in the year 1899 against persons engaged in illegal trawling in Scottish waters, and in how many instances there was a repetition of this offence by the same master; will he state in how many cases the men elected to go to prison rather than pay the fines imposed; and whether in all cases the trawling gear of convicted trawlers was confiscated.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Fishery Board for Scotland that there were seventeen prosecutions for illegal trawling in Scottish waters undertaken in 1899, and convictions were obtained in all of them. In one instance there was a repetition of the offence. In three cases the offenders chose the alternative of imprisonment. The gear belonging to nine of the trawlers implicated was forfeited.

NEW FISHERY CRUISER FOR SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that the Fishery Board for Scotland stated last year that it was the intention of the Board to secure a new cruiser for the purposes of sea police patrol out of the funds allocated to the Board under the Local Taxation (Scotland) Act, 1898, will the Secretary for Scotland state the cause of the delay in advertising for tenders for the new cruiser.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Fishery Board for Scotland that there has been no delay; the vessel has already been contracted for, and will be completed according to the original intention.

REPORT OF THE SCOTTISH FISHERY BOARD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state when the Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland will be laid upon the Table of the House.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I understand that this Report will be ready about the end of April, which is the usual time.

LOCHS (LEWIS) SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that in the parish of Lochs, Lewis (population 4,676), nearly the whole of the electors have no vote for the election of school board candidates by reason of their rentals being less than £4; has his attention been called to the fact that owing to the scarcity of persons qualified to vote, considerable difficulty was experienced at a recent school board election in finding persons qualified to sign the nomination papers, and that on this account only five candidates for the Board were nominated instead of seven; and will the demand, which has been forwarded from the parish of Lochs to the Scottish Education Department for a fresh election, be acceded to; and, in view of the dissatisfaction which the condition of the school board electorate causes in the parish of Lochs, as elsewhere in the Highlands, will he state what steps he proposes to take to remedy the grievance.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The question of the school board franchise has formed the subject of several replies to the hon. Member, who has already been informed that we are not prepared at present to propose legislation on the subject. I am aware that the recent election in the parish of Lochs has broken down owing to an informality in the nominations, but I am not prepared to say that this arose from an insufficient number of electors. The Department proposes to issue an order for a new election.

IRISH RAILWAYS AMALGAMATION BILL.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, in the proposed Southern Railways Amalgamation (Ireland) Bill, it is provided by Clause 19 that the companies will forward *via* Waterford until Rosslare is opened, thenceforward *via* Rosslare, traffic of all descriptions they can control between such portions of the districts served by their respective systems in the south and west of Ireland and the south and west of England, including London; and that the Corporation of Dublin passed a resolution disapproving of such diversion from the natural route of traffic; and whether the Board of Trade will consider this matter.

MR. RITCHIE: There are provisions in the Bills promoted by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company of Ireland, dealing with the through traffic, but I am not aware that Clause 19 in either Bill has any reference to the question. I have no doubt that the matter will receive the careful consideration of the Parliamentary Committee to whom the Bills are referred. If that Committee should desire any information from the Board of Trade it will be given.

CORK CUSTOM HOUSE.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is proposed to transfer the Inland Revenue Offices from the Custom House, Cork, to some more convenient locality in that city; and what premises have been acquired for the purpose; and, if so, where; what the cause of the delay in effecting the transfer is; and when it will be completed.

MR. HANBURY: As this question only appeared upon the Paper this morning, I have not been able to obtain the requisite information from the Departments concerned.

MULLINGAR DRAINAGE SYSTEM.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the drainage from all the public institutions in Mullingar and vicinity, including the military barracks and lunatic asylum, is at present emptied into the river Brosna, which flows through the town, the odour from which is dangerous to the health of the inhabi-

tants; that within a mile and a half of the town the river discharges itself into Lough Ennel, one of the best trout lakes in Ireland; and that dead trout are frequently found floating on the water at the point where the river enters the lake, poisoned by the water from the river; and will the Local Government Board take steps to enforce the Rivers Pollution Act so that the nuisance may be abated.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for MR. G. W. BALFOUR): In September last the Medical Officer of Health reported that the sewers of the town of Mullingar, including the sewage from the public institutions mentioned in the question, ran into the river Brosna and polluted it. The Local Government Board, on receipt of this Report, requested the rural district council to give the matter their early consideration with a view of improving the drainage of the town. No definite action has yet been taken by the council upon the communication addressed to them by the Board. This objectionable drainage system is, I understand, of long standing, and the Board will cause the matter to be further looked into.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT—COLLECTIONS OF RATES ON LICENSED PREMISES.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland if he is aware that, in direct contravention of Section 77 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, licensed premises are used as offices for the collection of rates; and if he will take steps to prevent this violation of the law.

MR. ATKINSON: The prohibition contained in the 77th Section is not absolute, but only conditional. I cannot therefore answer the question in its present general form. If the hon. Member will refer me to the particulars of some specific case in which the provisions of the 77th Section of the Act have been contravened, I will obtain a report as to the facts, and endeavour to reply.

MR. PINKERTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware of a case in his own constituency?

MR. ATKINSON: No, Sir.

CARRICKMACROSS WORKHOUSE DIETARY SCALE.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Agnew, Local Government Board Inspector, in his last half-yearly Report of Carrickmacross workhouse, suggested Irish stew, fish, and other expensive changes in the dietary of the inmates, which would cause great additional cost to the rates, and that the average cost per inmate per week in Carrickmacross workhouse is 3s. 9¼d. (according to the last Report issued by the Local Government Board), while in Clones the average cost per inmate per week is only 2s. 9¾d., and Monaghan 2s. 8d.; and whether, seeing that the same inspector superintends the three workhouses mentioned, and is trying still further to increase the already too high average cost by his suggestions already referred to in regard to Carrickmacross Workhouse, the Local Government Board will take steps to prevent any further additional changes being made in these districts.

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. Agnew in his last half-yearly report urged that the recommendations which the medical officer of the workhouse had made with regard to an improvement in the dietary of the inmates should be given effect to. The scale of dietary approved of by the medical officer was subsequently adopted by the guardians, and included Irish stew composed of two ounces of beef and two ounces of bacon per head, with vegetables and potatoes, on three days in the week. This dish, I may state, is strongly recommended by medical officers generally. Fish is not on the dietary scale of the Carrickmacross workhouse. The cost of maintenance per head in the three unions specified is as stated in the question. The average weekly cost of maintenance in workhouses throughout Ireland is 3s. 7¾d., so that the cost of maintenance in Carrickmacross, which is 3s. 9¼d., is only very slightly above the average. Clones union is not under Mr. Agnew's charge, as represented in the question.

IRISH WORKHOUSES—CONSUMPTION OF SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he will grant a Return of the quantity of spirituous liquors consumed in each

workhouse in Ireland for the year 1899, and the average number of inmates.

*MR. ATKINSON: The preparation of a Return such as indicated, to which there is no objection in principle, would devolve upon clerks of unions and rural district councils, and as these officials are fully occupied in the working of the Local Government Act, I must ask the hon. Member not to move for the Return at present. If he will do so in July next, I will endeavour to have the Return prepared as rapidly as possible.

IRISH ASYLUMS—RATES IN AID.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to a resolution of the Ennis Asylum Committee, in which they called on the Treasury to refund to the asylums of Ireland the amount of the rate-in-aid withheld by them in respect of the first three quarters of the year 1899; and whether the Government will favourably consider this request.

*MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): This question must be addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury.

IRISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that there are a great many fishing stations in the south of Ireland, and also that there is a large area scheduled as congested districts, he will consider the advisability of giving the south of Ireland representation on the Congested Districts Board.

*MR. ATKINSON: I have already stated that the constitution of the Congested Districts Board is regulated by statute. I have no reason to believe that the interests of the congested districts in the south of Ireland have been neglected, and there is at present no vacancy on the Board.

IRISH FISHERIES—QUEEN'S GAP, GALWAY.

MR. PINKERTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, within the last seven years, it was pointed out to the Irish Fishery Inspectors in writing that the Queen's Gap at Galway was not in accordance with the Fishery Acts, the sides not being parallel and in line with the stream, as laid down, which irregularity had enabled certain persons to so alter the gap as to reduce the flow of water which should have gone through such gap; and that the inspectors, after receipt of the above complaints, caused boards to be placed which temporarily to a certain extent corrected the evil; and whether, seeing that the gap is still not in accordance with the Fishery Acts (Irish), the sides not being parallel or in line with the stream, the Fishery Inspectors will cause the gap to be altered in accordance with the law laid down in 26 and 27 Vic.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, S.): The Fishery Inspectors many years ago required a gap to be made of a certain kind in this weir which they considered adequate and proper. The weir was accordingly so made and a certificate was granted. Part of the structure was subsequently carried away by flood, but the damage had recently been repaired. If any person contends that in its present condition it is illegal, his proper course to adopt is to sue for penalties at petty sessions under the 12th Section of the Statute.

IRISH PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure to amend the present system of Private Bill Legislation for Ireland.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Government do not propose to introduce such a Bill during the present session.

TOWN HOLDINGS—SUGGESTED COMMISSION.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will appoint a Commission to continue, complete, and issue a report upon the tenure and security of improvements to tenants of town holdings in Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of any further facts which require an investigation upon the tenure and security of improvements to tenants of town holdings in Great Britain and Ireland supplementary to the complete investigation which has been made by a Parliamentary Committee.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he intends to take the Second Reading of the Agricultural Holdings Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot name a day on which the Second Reading of this Bill will be taken, for the reason I have already indicated. I hope it may, however, be obtained by Easter.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Scottish Education Bill will be introduced into this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill to which this question refers has not yet been read a second time in the House of Lords, and it would, therefore, be premature to talk of fixing a day for its discussion here.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state whether the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill will be the first Order on Monday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I have already expressed a hope that we may be able to take this Bill as the first order on Monday. I am unable, however, to forecast precisely the course which business will take during the present week.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the Australian Commonwealth Bill be introduced by Easter, and when will it be printed and circulated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not at present in a position to make a statement as to whether the Bill will be introduced before Easter, nor when it will be printed and circulated.

MR. FLOWER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when the Second Reading of the Irish Tithe Rent-charge Bill will be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the Second Reading of the Irish Tithe Rent-charge Bill, I have already said that I will not take it before Easter, and not on the day after Easter, that day being inconvenient to hon. Gentlemen.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Nor on Thursday, 26th April, may we take it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I could not take it on that day.

MR. FLOWER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the importance of the subject, he will arrange that a discussion on the new Code of Regulations for day schools shall take place on some night not later than ten o'clock.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have nothing to add to what I said yesterday with regard to this. I must remind the House that the general arrangements I sketched out for next Thursday are necessarily dependent on our finishing the Committee stage of the Finance Bill to-day. We must take that *de die in diem* until it is finished, and I have no reason to doubt it will finish to-day.

MR. FLOWER: If not, will the right hon. Gentleman adjourn the debate early on Thursday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot. I have shown myself ready as far as possible to meet the views of hon. Members.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, as he has given a day for the discussion of the financial relations between England and Ireland, he will give the House an opportunity of considering the question of the representation of Ireland in the House of Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give a day for this discussion. As to the day which had been granted for a debate on the financial relations of Ireland, I think my hon. friend has forgotten the circumstance that it was merely the substitution of one day for another day which the Irish Members had already obtained. I had no alternative to the course I took.

There is no parallel between the two cases.

MR. COGHILL: In view of the fact that this Parliament has not had an opportunity of discussing this subject, and as there is not much business before the House this session, will an opportunity be afforded to discuss the question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When the business which is before the House has been concluded, I may be in a position to consider suggestions for filling up the remainder of the time of the House.

FOREIGN SEAMEN ON BRITISH TRANSPORTS.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I have received a letter from the Secretary to the Admiralty stating that he is unable to reply to the questions which appear on the Paper this day relating to foreign seamen on British transports, and asking me to postpone them until Friday. The two transport vessels, however, will sail before Friday, and I therefore propose to move the adjournment of the House in order to discuss the question as a matter of great importance. The terms of my resolution are—

"To move the adjournment of the House in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the employment on Government transport vessels of alien seamen, natives of countries which have shown marked hostility to Great Britain during the progress of the war in South Africa."

*MR. SPEAKER: The reference would be too general, and I suggest to the hon. Member that he should alter the terms so as to make them apply to the two transports about to sail.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: They are the steamers "Caspian" and "Sapphire."

[The hon. Member went to the Chair to alter his resolution.]

*MR. SPEAKER: I cannot accept the motion in the form in which it is drawn. The hon. Member had better recast it, and ask leave again to-morrow.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I will put it off until Thursday.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise to Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Company to extend their limits for the supply of gas; to consolidate and increase their capital; and for other purposes." Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [Lords.]

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS BILL [Lords.]

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MIDWIVES BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 112.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 150.]

NEW BILLS.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Bill to amend the Acts relating to Industrial Schools, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Flower, Colonel Denny, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Greville, Mr. Hazell, Mr. Alfred Hutton, and Mr. Trevelyan.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Industrial Schools," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 4th April, and to be printed. [Bill 151.]

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS).

Bill for the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other Public Offices in London, and for purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Attorney General, and Mr. Hanbury.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) BILL.

"For the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other Public Offices in London, and for

purposes connected therewith," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 152.]

PETTY CUSTOMS ABOLITION (SCOTLAND).

Bill to abolish Petty Customs in Scotland, and to make provision for levying a rate in lieu thereof, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Asquith, Mr. E. B. Baillie, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Nicol, and Mr. Ure.

PETTY CUSTOMS ABOLITION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To abolish Petty Customs in Scotland, and to make provision for levying a rate in lieu thereof," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 153.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Bill to make further provision for parish councils in Scotland borrowing for the purpose of providing public offices, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Baird, Mr. Buchanan, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael, Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. Renshaw, and Mr. Wylie.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

"To make further provision for parish councils in Scotland borrowing for the purpose of providing public offices," presented, and read for the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 154.]

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) (SCOTLAND).

Bill to regulate the attendance of children at school in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Captain Sinclair, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Crombie, Colonel Denny, Mr. Parker Smith, and Mr. Robert Wallace.

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To regulate the attendance of children at school in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 155.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): There is a general understanding that the Committee stage of the Finance Bill shall be resumed to-day; but last evening there were one or two points brought before me on which I thought it would be necessary to add some clauses to the Bill. I therefore put down Committee of Ways and Means as the first order of the day in the belief that the preliminary resolutions relating to these matters might occupy a few minutes before going into Committee. But I find that the hon. Member for King's Lynn, acting in a manner for which there is hardly a precedent, has placed on the Paper a motion on going into Committee; and when once a discussion of that kind begins it is impossible to say how long it may go on. In these circumstances I propose the postponement of the Committee of Ways and Means until to-morrow, and that the House should proceed at once with the Committee stage of the Finance Bill.

Committee deferred till to-morrow.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe, in the Chair.]

Clause 4:—

*MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.) said his object in opposing this clause was to save Ireland from the very heavy tax which was imposed by it. The clause hit at two classes of Irishmen—the manufacturer and the consumer; and the amount of the tax made it very difficult to get at the consumer otherwise than by a reduction in the quality of the material supplied to him. Now one of the causes of much evil in Ireland was the supply of bad and inferior drink, and, as a total abstainer himself, he considered it very reprehensible that any temptation should be placed in the way of either the manufacturer or the retailer to supply the public with drink of an inferior quality. But they were forced either to reduce the quality of the liquor they sold

or to raise the price of the article, and the latter alternative was scarcely possible, seeing that the added tax was not sufficiently large to enable it to be charged against the individual consumer unless they themselves made a huge profit out of the transaction without the State deriving any advantage whatsoever. Their contention was that the tax should not be put on Ireland at all. They objected, in fact, to all taxes raised for the prosecution of the war, because they were opposed to the war itself. They objected, further, in a particular manner to a tax which struck at an Irish industry. They had some of the largest and best known breweries in the world in Ireland, and they did not know what might be the effect upon them. But they had reason to fear that effect when they remembered how in former days, when the spirit tax was increased, the number of distilleries in Ireland was reduced at one swoop from ninety-one to twenty-nine, thereby depriving a large number of people of employment. By inflicting these taxes, therefore, they struck at the very poorest of the people, they forced them to seek employment elsewhere, and, as there was no other place for them to go to in Ireland, they had to migrate either to England or America. There was reason to fear, too, that another effect of this tax would be to place the manufactories of Ireland in the hands of the larger companies and the richer people, and to create monopolies, which were bad for any trade. There were a number of small thriving breweries scattered throughout the country, which gave a great deal of employment to the people, and it had been calculated by those conversant with the facts that this tax would sweep away a very large proportion of these breweries, by depriving them of the profits they now made, and rendering it impossible to keep them going. Although their protest against this tax might be vain and ineffective, it was their duty, as the representatives of the great majority of the Irish people, to oppose every clause of the Finance Bill. They believed that their country was already over-taxed, and these new proposals would add greatly to the disproportion of Imperial taxation which Irishmen were made to bear. The present proposal would impose a charge of £150,000 per annum upon their country, and it had been calculated that a shilling per barrel upon beer would bring in about £116,000.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to intervene to point out that he has mistaken the clause. This one does not particularly affect Ireland, as there is hardly any beer imported into that country; indeed, it would be against the advantage of Ireland to omit the clause.

MR. HAYDEN thanked the right hon. Gentleman for his intervention, and said he would not now move his Amendment. He hoped he would still retain his right to move it at a later stage.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Of course, the hon. Member will have the right to move any Amendment which is in order. As no Amendment has been moved to this clause I have simply to put the question "that Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:—

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.) said his hon. friend would soon have an opportunity of re-stating the very cogent arguments which he had been submitting, as he did not propose to occupy much time in stating the grounds for his opposition to this clause. They were, of course, opposed to all increases of taxation, and they were specially opposed to added duties upon commodities which were articles of common consumption in Ireland. He feared that the duty would have disastrous effects upon the general body of Irish taxpayers, and also upon their exports. The present clause imposed a duty of one shilling upon every thirty-six gallons of beer. But beer was being more and more consumed by the working classes of the country, and hence it was that Irish working men, the great bulk of whom were opposed to the war, would have to bear a considerable proportion of the burden. None of them desired to give further facilities for heavy drinking in Ireland, but they must take things as

they found them, and surely they ought not to unduly tax a man because he chose beer for his beverage. Undoubtedly it was the working-class population which would be penalised by this tax, and he therefore moved the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 13, to leave out the words 'the United Kingdom,' and insert the words 'Great Britain' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'the United Kingdom' stand part of the clause."

MR. HAYDEN: I will not trouble the Committee by repeating my arguments. What I want to point out is that this Bill adds £150,000 to the taxation of Ireland, of which about £118,000 will be paid by the consumers of beer in that country and £130,000 by the exporters of beer. We consider this tax an unjust addition to the burdens of our country. We also consider that it is unjust that we should have to bear any portion of the cost of a war which we are not in favour of, and which we have always protested against. The amount of taxation involved is very unfair to Ireland because it does not take into consideration many things which we think ought to be considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. One thing which I would like to urge most strongly, is the fact that this tax does not really come upon the mass of the consumers, except by a method which is to be condemned in the strongest manner possible, and that is by the reduction of the quality of alcoholic drink. I think it is regrettable that in Ireland or in any other country, so much alcohol should be consumed. I do not agree, however, that there is more drink consumed in Ireland than in other countries. The greatest evil is the bad drink which people sometimes get. There are two ways in which the trade can get back this tax; one is by insisting that the price must be very high, or by reducing the quality and giving the people very bad beer. I think this may be one of the effects in England and Ireland of the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For this and other reasons I strongly object to this proposal, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will make some statement, which will show us how this tax can be placed upon the shoulders o the people by some other means. In his Budget speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he considered it right in all these proposals to make every class in the community contribute according to their means to the taxes which the war involves. I hope he will be able to show us by what means, otherwise than by taking an inferior drink, the mass of the people who consume drink can pay any portion of this tax, because one shilling per barrel of thirty-six gallons cannot be divided up into any coin of the realm upon quarts, pints, half-pints, or glasses. I think if the right hon. Gentleman had gone a little further and placed a higher tax upon us in that respect, it would have been fairer to Ireland. Not only has this proposal a tendency to palm bad material upon the people, but it is calculated to cripple some of our smaller breweries and place the trade in the hands of monopolists.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I do not intend to enter into details upon this question, because I heard your predecessor in the chair rule that as the question had been previously discussed upon the tea duty it should not be renewed upon any other part of the Bill. Perhaps I may be allowed to make two remarks in answer to some observations made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday. He said that the arrangement of 1816, by which equal taxation with England was imposed upon Ireland, was assented to by the Irish representatives. I wish to say that there was no assent of the kind given.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is opening up a question which will not be in order.

MR. CLANCY: I wish simply to confine myself to a protest. From 1816 down to the time when the taxes were equalised a continual protest was uttered on behalf of Ireland, even by some of the Conservative Members. As to this particular tax I conceive that there is a special reason why Ireland should be exempted under the beer duty. I think it is admitted on all hands that the system of conducting public house business differs entirely in the two countries. In England there exists what is known

almost universally as the tied house system, and we all know what that means. It means that the big brewers really own the houses in which their beer is sold. I do not profess to understand how that can be, because in Ireland the law is that the resident manager of the public house is the person who is responsible for the sale of drink, and he must be the legal owner of the establishment. He must have a beneficial interest in it, and the fact that he has an interest in it and owns the lease has to be proved before he gets the license in his own name. That is the security demanded by the tribunal which gives the licence, so that the public-house will be properly conducted. The law may be different in England—in fact, it must be, when you have the nominees and representatives of the big brewers managing all these public-houses. The managers of these public-houses in England do not bear any part of the cost which may be involved in an increase of taxation. The real owners who supply the beer and manufacture it are the great firms, and they are the people who really bear any burden involved in any increase of taxation which cannot be got out of the consumer. In Ireland the state of things is entirely different, for when a man applies for a public-house licence he must produce in the court his lease of the place. He must also show that he has paid a substantial sum of money for it, and that it is a real bargain and sale; also that he has invested his own money in it. It is very often a source of complaint and almost a reason for refusing the licence that the man has borrowed the money almost to the last penny from bankers or from private friends. The fact remains that he has to produce his lease showing that he has acquired the public-house in a legal manner, and prove that he has paid a substantial price for the property. That is the guarantee with which he comes to the court, that he will himself conduct the business properly. The consequence of all this is that the brewer in England bears the burden of additional taxation on beer, while in Ireland it is not only a poorer class but a larger class who have to bear the burden. I know that there is a good deal of odium cast upon the trade, and while I admire the efforts and sincerity of those who work in the cause of temperance, a great many of their attacks on the trade I regard as little short of hypocrisy. These owners of public houses in Ireland are very closely watched, and the law is very stringent in regard to them. I believe they are more closely watched in Ireland by the constabulary and the metropolitan police in Dublin than anywhere in England. As a matter of fact, I believe it to be true that the great majority of these public house owners, who are carrying on a business which is recognised by the law, have been falsely accused of many abuses with which they had nothing to do. The result, nevertheless, is that they are treated in the same way as if they were millionaires who brew the beer in England, or as if they were Guinnesses in Ireland. I think it is very unfair to take advantage of an odium unjustly created to fix burdens upon publicans that they would not have been obliged to bear if they were carrying on their business in England. That difference is, I think, a very strong ground for treating Ireland in a different way to England. In addition to this, it is a fact that Ireland is a poorer country, and you cannot take money out of the pockets of the publicans of Ireland without impoverishing the country to a greater extent than you do if you take it out of the pockets of the same class in England. The Chancellor of the Exchequer quoted figures to show that savings bank deposits had increased, and so on. I have been listening to that sort of thing ever since I entered public life, and I am amused by its vitality. I can remember when the late Lord Carlisle, thirty years ago, went about the country boasting that a few more cattle had been exported from Ireland, and that the country was abounding in wealth. Shortly afterwards there was a famine, and several other famines have occurred since then. For all these reasons I think there is a strong case, apart altogether from the obligations imposed by the Act of Union, for treating Ireland as a separate country, and for exempting her from this tax.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the hon. Member who moved to omit Ireland from this clause will forgive me if I do not enter at length into his arguments. It seems to me that whatever cause of complaint hon. Members from Ireland may have with regard to tea and tobacco, it absolutely disappears when we come to the question of beer, because there is no

doubt whatever that the great bulk of this tax will fall either on the brewers or the consumers in Great Britain rather than in Ireland. As far as I can judge, out of £1,750,000, the total amount of this tax, something less than £110,000 will fall on Ireland. That is not by any means a large proportion; in fact, it is a small proportion. But the hon. Member for South Roscommon suggested that this tax would interfere with the great Irish industry known as Guinness's Brewery. I fancy none of the shareholders of that admirable concern will be much affected.

MR. HAYDEN: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstood me. I did not suggest that this tax would interfere with a business like Guinness's, but I did suggest it would interfere with small provincial brewers throughout the country, and place the trade in the hands of Guinness.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Then I am afraid the hon. Member is rather contradicted by the hon. Member for North Dublin, because his argument was that while the brewers in England might bear the tax, the brewers in Ireland would throw it on the publicans, owing to the different system existing in that country. It is very difficult to say precisely in what way an indirect tax will reach the consumer. My belief is that this tax will ultimately come to the consumer, somehow or other. It may be in some cases by the addition of a little water, which may not be a bad thing for the consumer, but which certainly would be a bad thing for the Exchequer. I hope that hon. Gentlemen, even from Ireland, will see that, having imposed additional taxation on alcohol, I am bound to tax beer more heavily than spirits because beer is at present more lightly taxed than spirits. We could not have done anything with regard to existing indirect taxation which would have affected Ireland less than this tax on beer.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I approach the question from a different standpoint to that of my hon. friends. My view is that this tax will be an injury to the barley growers of Ireland, and that worse material will be put into beer and stout in Ireland. The majority of the people of Ireland are farmers, not like the people of this country, who have large industries and manufactures to depend on. In a great many counties in Ireland the best barley in the world is grown, and this increase in the tax on beer may cause the brewers of Ireland to purchase their barley in foreign countries. That would be a deplorable state of things, especially from the farmers' point of view. Even the right hon. Gentleman himself admits that this tax will come out of the pockets of the consumers, and he makes light of the water that will be added to beer. I object to this tax on the part of the Irish farmers, who may be injured by it, and also because it is for the purposes of a war with which the people of Ireland have no sympathy, and which they regard as unjust. I hope my hon. friend will proceed to a division.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I protest against this tax on different grounds from my hon. friends. I object to it because it is opposed to the terms of the Act of Union. I admit beer is a commodity pretty heavily taxed in this country, and not without reason. For instance, if the House of Lords became fossilised you would simply turn on the beer tap to obtain members. I never had the pleasure of holding a post-mortem on a noble Lord, but I believe the colour of his blood is different from that of a Commoner. In forty years we have lost in Ireland more than a million in population, and during the same period our taxes have increased by more than a million sterling. Where then does the Act of Union come in? You broke the treaty you signed in the Transvaal in 1857, having been put on the scent, when a countryman of mine—O'Reilly—found a pebble which turned out to be a diamond, and which he sold for £500. You now ignore the treaty with Ireland, and treat it merely as a district of England, whereas it is in a different position altogether. On those grounds I protest strongly against this tax.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I have heard with the utmost astonishment the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that an attempt would in all probability be made to evade this tax by the addition of water to beer. Coming

from any person any suggestion of that kind is, in my opinion, most undesirable, to say the least of it; but coming from such a high authority as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I think it is perfectly astounding. The retailers of beer are a class who will probably take the hint, and the result will be that the people will not only have to pay a greater price for their beer, but they will probably get their beer watered down. That would be most undesirable, and I for one am perfectly astonished that such a statement should have been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I protest against the inclusion of Ireland in this increased taxation, because I think Ireland ought not to bear increased taxation at all. On the other hand, I would feel very much inclined to argue that if taxation is to be put on Ireland and England it would be a much fairer thing to put a greater tax on beer, and not increase the tax on whisky at all, because whereas about half the quantity of beer per head is consumed in Ireland that is consumed in England, the consumption of whisky per head is about the same, and, of course, England is the larger and the richer country, and beer is the national drink. That being so, it would be infinitely fairer to put 2s. extra on beer, and not to increase the tax on whisky at all. I agree with my hon. friend who desires to exclude Ireland altogether, because I think the inclusion of Ireland is most unfair; but the beer tax will not affect the Irish people as much as the tax on whisky. Beer is manufactured mostly in England, and I say that you ought in common fairness to make the people of this country pay in something like a fair proportion towards the cost of the war. An increase of only a shilling a barrel upon beer is altogether unfair in proportion to the taxation you are putting on whisky. I say that sixpence additional on every gallon of whisky weighs infinitely heavier upon Ireland than the extra one shilling a barrel on beer upon England. For that reason I think the proposal is in itself unfair. I regret at all times, Mr. Ellis, to use any language which may not be strictly Parliamentary, and I always try to avoid it, especially when we have the pleasure of seeing you in the chair; but I really do say that I find it quite impossible to characterise in language which would be considered Parliamentary the attempt which has been made to make the Irish people—and the very poorest of the Irish people — pay a larger contribution towards the expenses of the war. It is the most unjust, the most unfair, and the meanest proposition that ever was made at any time by any Chancellor of the Exchequer. This war is to cost an enormous amount of money, and to tax every unfortunate Irishman who takes a glass of stout or beer with his dinner or his supper in the evening, and make that man pay towards the expenses of your enormous army of a quarter of a million of men in South Africa, is a most unjust and iniquitous proposal. In regard to the increased tax on beer, I think the same thing applies to it as applied to the increased taxes on other commodities. It seems as if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had singled out all those things that are necessaries of life for taxation. There are a variety of things that might be taxed in Ireland, which I believe would have realised the money the right hon. Gentleman wants, but he makes no such proposition. There is no proposition to tax champagne or the expensive wines that are consumed by rich people.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I increased the duty on champagne and expensive wines last year.

MR WILLIAM REDMOND: Yes, but I think you ought to put even more extra taxation on them this year. If it were found necessary by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to propose an additional tax on expensive wines last year, when the whole world was in a state of peace, there is an additional reason for putting on an additional tax upon expensive drinks now, when money has to be raised for the war. The gentlemen in this country who drink their bottle of champagne are quite indifferent as to how long the war will last, for it will not cost them any more for their bottle of champagne; but the unfortunate coal porter who works all day on the quays of Dublin will find, when he gets his half-pint of stout, that he has to pay an additional halfpenny for it. Now, I ask any impartial man, is that justice; is it fairplay? Is that laying with equal hand an equal burden of taxation on all classes according to their means of bearing taxation? It is not. And it is addi-

tionally unfair when it applies to Ireland. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite are amused at that; but I maintain that we are entitled to say that this taxation is additionally unfair on Ireland, and I could prove that without the slightest trouble if you, Mr. Ellis, would allow me to do so by going into the question of the financial relations of Great Britain and Ireland. It is within the knowledge of every Member of the House, and of the outside public, that there are special circumstances in connection with the taxation of Ireland for Imperial purposes which justify me in saying in spite of the laughter of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that this tax, which falls hardly on the poor people of Great Britain, falls with additional hardship on the poor people of Ireland. I wish to say no more than I have said, because I know that I could not influence the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I conclude by referring to his original astounding suggestion that this extra taxation would be met by the people having their beer watered. The Irish people are pretty good judges, and know whether their beer is watered or not; but if the people of this country get their beer watered it will serve them right, because they have allowed this country and the Government to drift into this most disastrous, unjust, and expensive war in South Africa.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I wish, in a very few words, to enter my protest against this beer tax. This tax hits my constituency in a peculiar way, because Kilkenny, famous in many other respects, has been specially famous for the excellent quality of its beer. There are two or three breweries in the city, and, in fact, they afford the only means of employment in the city, so that not only are the poor people who drink beer but the industry itself is hit by this extra tax on beer. It is an extraordinary thing that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have selected the Irish people to bear this extra tax to pay the expenses of a war with which, it is notorious, they have no sympathy. The people of Ireland have demonstrated their opinion against the war, and I believe it is certain that if the masses of the people of this country were only allowed to exercise their right of free speech they also would pronounce against the war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking on the proposed increase of the tax on tea, said that the large mass of the people of the country should be asked to contribute to the expenses of the war as well as the classes. I deny that entirely. I say that the masses of the people had nothing whatever to do with instigating the war, and that they are already contributing most to it. They are contributing the fighting material and the blood which is being wasted in the war. The least that the wealthy magnates who got up the war can do is to contribute the money to pay for it. My hon. friend the Member for East Clare mentioned champagne. I think the people who indulge in champagne in glorification of the war should pay for it. The prime mover in the war, Mr. Cecil Rhodes, laid in a great store of champagne at Kimberley, and allowed the masses of the people who were in the Army to lose their lives for his honour and glory. It is absurd to say that you should tax tea and beer, which are the necessaries of life of the poor, in order to make them contribute to the cost of the war, when they are already giving their lives, or the lives of their breadwinners, to the war. I think every hon. Member who claims to represent the masses of the people is bound to protest against this new tax on beer. So far as my constituents are concerned, it is a very serious matter, because of the reasons I have given. The beer industry in Kilkenny is the only industry in that city. Before the Union was brought about——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is wandering considerably from the Amendment before the House.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Am I not entitled, Mr. Ellis, to refer to the fact that my constituency may be brought to ruin by this tax? Before the Union Kilkenny was a city of wealth, with a population four times the number it has now. And is this diminished population to be overtaxed again? I shall, of course, vote against the imposition of this tax.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork Co., S.): As another Irish Member, I rise to protest against this increased taxation. If this tax is imposed on porter in Ireland the direct effect will be that all the small breweries will be absorbed by the larger, and that I would regret. On the sea side

of my constituency there is a great deal of barley grown, and the growers have a ready market for their produce at the local brewery. This tax must fall upon the brewer, who is the only one who can pay it, for the margin of profit on the sale of the barley is already too low, and the growers would not be able to contribute to it. I have no knowledge of whether it is the intention of Her Majesty to visit South Cork, but if it is her intention so to do I am afraid the ardour of the people who will drink her health will be damped if they know that in so doing they are also providing sinews for a war against which they have protested, and in the policy of which they do not believe. On those grounds I support the Amendment of my hon. friend.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) was opposed to the extra duty of a shilling a barrel on beer. From long experience, both in this country and America, he had come to the conclusion that the more the legislation in the cause of temperance and the higher the tax put upon certain articles the greater became the ardour of the people to possess those articles, even to the extent of breaking the law. Hon. Members would find, if they carried their recollections back, that in spite of all the temperance measures passed by the House of Commons the consumption of drink per head had largely increased. In 1879 it amounted to £3 10s. per head, and in 1898 it had increased to £3 16s. By increasing this duty the Government were not only not assisting temperance reform, but they were laying a very heavy burden upon the poor men. After a varied experience in America, where the abolition of drink was carried by the vote of the people in some States——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the question before the House, which is the omission of Ireland from this particular increase of duty.

*MR. FLAVIN said in putting this tax on beer the Government was not only doing an injustice to the working man of Great Britain, but a greater injustice to his fellow in Ireland, whose revenue would not compare with that of the working man of Great Britain. The imposition of the tax would also dislocate and demoralise the small brewing industries in Ireland. In conclusion, the hon. Gentleman pointed out that it was manifestly unfair that Ireland should be compelled to contribute to a tax with the reason for which they did not agree. Already in his opinion more duties were imposed than were sufficient to meet any emergency, but Ireland had from beginning to end disagreed with the war policy, and had consistently condemned it, and now the Irish representatives could only protest against the tax of one shilling per barrel on beer both with their voices and their votes.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 261; Noes, 40. (Division List No. 84.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert H.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George Alexander
Baker, Sir John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beach, Rt. Hon. W. W B (Hants.
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derb'shire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Colville, John
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow.
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon

Mr. Edward Barry.

;las, Rt. Hon. A Akers-
;las, Chas. M. (Lanark)
ı, Sir William
ı, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
t, Hon. A. Ralph D.
ıott, Alfred
ell, Sir T. George
wes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
ıson, R.C. Munro-(Leith)
ıasson, Rt Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
ı, George H.
ıy, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
ı, Frederick William
naurice, Lord Edmond
nery, Sir Fortescue
her, Sir Henry
er, Ernest
ıer, Henry William
ır, Colonel (Lancaster)
er, Dr. Joseph Francis
Lewis
ıway, William Johnson
t, William
e, Sydney
ona, J. Lloyd
s, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans
, Charles Tyrrell
ıt, John Saunders
stone, Rt. Hn. H. John
ard, Daniel Ford
on, Sir A. Frederick
Charles
ıworthy, Major-General
on, Hon. John Edward
ı, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
ıen, George J. (Sussex)
ding. Edward Alfred
ıon, John
ille, Hon. Ronald
, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Sir Cameron
ane, Richard Burdon
ıy, Thomas Frederick
ilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
ıury, Rt. Hon. Robt. W.
on, Sir Reginald
ourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
y, Laurence
, Thomas Leigh
ıood, George
ıtt, Sir James Horner
ıe, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
ll, Walter
h, James
on, John Henniker
erwick, Thomas C. H.
ır, Augustus
erson, Alexander
ıon-Hodge, Robert T.
man, Sir Alfred
e, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
e, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
nd. William Henry
iman, Frederick John
ıdsworth, Sir W. Henry
Hozier, Hn James Henry Cecil
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lambert, George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land
Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. E. H.
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverp'l)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall
M'Ewan, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James
Malcolm. Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Sir G A (Lancs S'port
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Sir Thos (Hartlep'l
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Souttar, Robinson
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Jos. Powell- (Birm.
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R. (Bath)
Woods, Samuel
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. S.-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

ham, William (Cork, N. E.)
ose, Robert
, E. (Cork, S.)
, Edward
v, James Laurence
y, John Joseph
on, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James.
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hogan, James Francis

Jordan, Jeremiah
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'nsC
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ghee, Richard
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morris, Samuel
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterf'd)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

*SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): In rising to support the Amendment which stands first in my name I desire to state that it was substituted for that previously drafted, but unfortunately it places me in the position of wishing, apparently, to reduce the amount sought to be raised by the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a course of proceeding which would not commend itself, I am certain, to any of the three classes on whose behalf I am speaking—namely, the farmer, the maltster, and the beer-drinker. The last thing that any of them would desire, I am certain, is that we should seek to reduce in any way or to hinder the collection of that sum of money which is necessary to carry on the war which has been forced upon us. I do not consider that this is the proper time to make what might be called a pure beer speech, but the principle that underlies both of the Amendments on the Paper is the unfairness of the present incidence of the duty on beer, that it is inequitable as between barley-malt and substitutes. The percentage of barley-malt used in beer as compared with substitutes shows very alarming figures. The average quantity of malt used by brewers to each hundredweight of sugar in 1882, just after the repeal of the malt tax, was 42 bushels; in 1895 the average had fallen to twenty-four bushels, and in 1897-98 to under sixteen bushels. The latest available figures are made up to September, 1898, and I have not the slightest doubt that since that time the proportion has fallen still further. Although I have said this is not the time to make a pure-beer speech, I wish it to be understood that the desire for pure beer is not less than it was. That will be almost universally admitted. It is being asked for in increasing quantities, so far as I can judge from the correspondence that reaches me, and there is no doubt that the consumption of beer and the quality of the beer which is consumed in this country is a very fit subject, not only for the consideration of this House, but of any thoughtful man who takes an interest in the well-being of his fellow-countrymen. Does not the immortal bard say that "a quart of ale is a dish for a king"? Well, I don't think the ale that is met with in the East End of London and some of the great towns is such as you would venture to give to any king—not even to King Prempeh. The "fourpenny" which the labouring classes have to drink would, I think, hardly come under that description. Why are they compelled to drink it? I have been told by a great authority on several occasions. It was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire who told us on the last occasion when the question of pure beer was discussed, the 29th of March, 1896, he was compelled to drink it because of a monopoly "so powerful that nothing can resist it." The right hon. Gentleman was right. He found it very difficult himself to resist it. In the course of the long and weary watchings I have had in this House on this question, when I saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire leaning on the arms of the late Mr. Whitbread, and that high priest of mysteries, the Member for Wimbledon—I have wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman would get any advantage from bowing down in the house of Rimmon. The Amendment I first placed on the Paper provided a substitute for the amount which I desire to take off the pure beer. The original Amendment would not have materially reduced the yield of the duty, and it would have compelled those who are admittedly making the largest profit to contribute their fair proportion. I hope if the present Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot see his way to differentiate between those who are admittedly making a very large profit out of the use of sugar and other substitutes, and those who continue to use only malt, so as to make the burden fall upon the shoulders which are best able to bear it, perhaps some future Chancellor of the Exchequer may be able to do so—some imaginative Chancellor like the Member for King's Lynn, or someone who occupies that important position in future might very likely see his way to do

something to redress the inequality. It used to be said: How are we to differentiate? The Inland Revenue authorities now have forms by which it is possible to see at a glance the sort and quantities of substitutes used. That quantity is an increasing one. If we had lived in the time of Sheridan I have no doubt he would have been tempted to repeat that interesting verse of his on this particular point—

"They've raised the price of table drink,
What is the reason, do you think?
The tax on malt's the cause, I hear,
But what has malt to do with beer?"

Very little nowadays, I am sorry to say, and that is the reason I am on my legs speaking upon this Amendment. The manufacture of malt in this country employs a great many hands. The growth of barley used to employ a great many hands, but it employs a much smaller number now. I am not speaking now of anything at second-hand. I am speaking of a thing I understand, because I am sorry to say I grow barley myself, and I know how, year by year, it becomes more and more difficult to sell barley at anything like a price which pays the cost of cultivation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth made some allusions to this subject the other day. I was very sorry to miss that speech, as the right hon. Gentleman does not come amongst us so often now as he used to do, and I am told he was in fine form. I have always found him in the best form when gambolling in the barley field or hiding in the hop garden, and I hope we shall have the benefit of hearing him to-night on this great subject. Doubtless he will be disposed to say that this increased use of substitutes is exaggerated. I do not think it is. I will not weary the House by reading long extracts, but there are one or two to which I must allude. The question of the use of substitutes was alluded to by the hon. Member for Wimbledon in a very memorable declaration which he made when speaking in this House in 1894 on a similar Bill to the one now under consideration. He said*—

"An English brewer wished to use English barley, if possible; but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to insist upon running up the taxation on beer to such a point that it could not be made from malt and hops, the brewer, like other manufacturers, would naturally seek other ingredients."

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxiv., p. 502.

That is not good reading for the agriculturist or the English farmer, nor is it good reading for the man who represents sixty miles of agricultural country. What has been the effect of this present proposal? I had a short letter this morning from a very large maltster, saying—

"I was very pleased to see the notice of your Amendment. I have been told by six large brewers that the extra shilling per barrel duty would drive them to use substitutes—raw grain, maize, rice grits, sugar, etc. This would operate against the barley grower and maltster, as some brewers use from fifty to seventy-five per cent. of sugar. I think your suggestion of four shillings per hundredweight on sugar, etc., is very fair, and could be easily collected with the beer duty. I enclose you an advertisement from a Burton paper, which has appeared since the duty of one shilling was proposed."

The advertisement is very short, and is as follows:—

"——, ——, manufacturers of flaked malts, maize, and rice. The position we hold, as one of the largest maize importers in the United Kingdom, and our modern plant, enable us to compete most favourably in quality and price. Samples and prices on application."

That only appeared after the extra shilling duty was announced. It is in very large print, evidently a very expensive advertisement, and one which could have been inserted only in the hope and expectation of a very large business resulting. It is said that this duty is collected from the brewers. Yes, it is collected from the brewers, but it is not paid by them. These extracts which I have just read show that. It is very important that it should be understood that the increasing of a duty does not apparently reduce the brewer's profits. The price of the beer to the public is the same, although the price of the materials is more, and, therefore, substitutes must be used. We barley growers and maltsters suffer because less malt is used, and the beer drinkers suffer because they get a more sophisticated drink. In the Amendment which I originally desired to move, I had to bear in mind that had that 4s. per cwt. been placed on sugar substitutes, while it would have realised about the same amount for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would not even then have brought up the cost of these materials to that of barley malt. It is very necessary to bear this in mind, because it may be that in the future this tax, which is so eagerly

availed of by all Chancellors of the Exchequer, should be placed, as I have said, a little more on the right shoulders. I have heard—I do not know whether it is true—that some of this tax is to be recouped by the brewers by raising the price to the publican. The publican is not supposed to charge more, but he will have to pay more. That is a part of the happy system to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire has so often alluded. The brewer has many ways of recouping himself, and my object in this Amendment is that there should be an equitable adjustment of the duty according to the materials used. He can use whatever he likes, but if he uses the cheaper materials, and so makes a larger percentage of profit, it is only right that he should contribute a larger sum to the national Exchequer. I regret very much—and I am not the only Member of this House who so regrets—that that Amendment was out of order. I have received a great many letters and assurances from Members of the House to the effect that if I had been able to move that Amendment they would have been glad to support me, because they think the duty as at present levied is inequitable. The brewer who uses substitutes as against barley-malt turns out more beer with the same amount of plant, so that he is all the more able to bear extra taxation. By raising the duty on substitutes any Government would, in my humble opinion, confer a distinct benefit on arable farmers, on maltsters, on beer drinkers, and on the cause of true temperance. I know very well that in this House you have got to hear the other side of the question, and I shall no doubt be confronted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the findings of the Beer Materials Committee. This Beer Materials Committee, which, in a weak moment, I accepted, did not agree with my view. I admit that. I am anxious not to say anything about the Committee myself — it is not proper that a Member of Parliament should — but I would like, if I might, to read some remarks of Mr. Clare Sewell Read, who was himself a member of the Committee, and for a long time an honoured Member of this House, and who stands as high in the agricultural world as any man in England. He said at Norwich directly he was free to speak after the Committee had reported—

"At the first meeting I told Dr. Bell, 'I shall be in a minority of one, and when I write my Minority Report you five will have a Majority Report.' . . . Later in the speech, he said: In the first place, I may state that our agricultural witnesses were very shabbily treated. I have served on three Commissions and on scores of Committees, and I have always seen this, that any man who is not a real expert, but a common creature like a farmer, is allowed to send in the heads of his evidence to the Chairman, and to tell his story in his own way. But I think that Mr. Sapwell will bear me out that this was not the way in which our farmers were treated by this Committee. They were cross-examined as if they were at the Old Bailey, and it was not until we had sat for eighteen months that I got the Chairman to allow, and to insist upon it, that witnesses should be permitted to tell their story in their own way."

These are not my remarks, but those of Mr. Clare Sewell Read. So much for the composition and the proceedings of the Committee. What were its findings? Naturally, they were adverse to our contentions. But there was a Minority Report, signed by Mr. Clare Sewell Read himself. What were its findings? They, very shortly, were—

"That a beer brewed with substitutes cannot have the same composition as an article produced from malt and hops only. That the use of substitutes undoubtedly entails the introduction of substances foreign to normal beer. That these substitutes may in some instances be injurious to health, and are certainly less nutritious and wholesome. That beer made from malt and hops only is brewed by nearly half of the brewers in the United Kingdom, and that, therefore, it is possible to produce good beer without the use of sugar or any other substitutes. That the use of preservatives may be, and probably is in many cases, much abused. That at present the public have no adequate protection against the use of deleterious substances in the manufacture of beer. That it would be neither difficult nor vexatious to enforce such legislation as would ensure to the purchaser his right, when he asks for beer—the national beverage—to obtain a beer brewed entirely from malt and hops."

Is it not in the national interest to brew beer from malt and hops? I attribute some of the great victories we have won and the great deeds we have done to a certain extent to the consumption of good beer. I have heard many remarks to the effect that the character of our population, especially in the great towns, has decidedly altered. I think hon. Members who have recently had the opportunity of seeing in our streets celebrations of the victories won by our Army must have observed an

Sir Cuthbert Quilter.

excitability more akin to that of the Neapolitan fisherman than the staid way in which our citizens were accustomed to conduct themselves on such occasions in former days, and I have come to the conclusion that it is the deterioration of their native drink which has something to do with this great alteration. I do not wish to say anything about Bavarian ales, but when I was over in Bavaria I was very much struck with the steadiness, the sobriety, and the great advance made by that beer-drinking community. It is a matter of common knowledge that this is due to the Bavarian and lager beers which they drink. I am proud to say that good lager beer can now be made in England, not a thousand miles from Burton. It is a fact that a considerable quantity of that beer is not at all objectionable or injurious to anyone. There is an hon. Member who is well known for his vocal talents and for his readiness to give his services; and he told me that, on one occasion, he was present at a supper in Bavaria, and after taking part in it and singing many songs, he found to his horror that he had consumed twenty-two glasses of lager beer. He went out with fear and trembling, and was pleased and indeed rather surprised to find on leaving the hotel that he was not only perfectly well, but on returning to his lodgings he was able to prosecute with success two very difficult anatomical problems to which he had been for a very long time devoting himself. It is quite clear that the effect of this beer which Bavarians enjoy so much, and which seems to be denied to the majority of Englishmen, is an entirely different thing to that which obtains throughout the greater part of this country. I send two or three wagons and horses to the market town, and if anything goes wrong, the invariable answer I get from them is, "We stopped and had a glass of beer at so-and-so." They may have had one glass or two glasses, but I do not suppose, at any rate, that they have had twenty-two glasses, and surely, therefore, there must be something in the quality of the liquor. I do wish to impress upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer and upon this House that there is more in this question than merely an afternoon discussion to provide so nething to laugh and smile at. We are engaged in a very serious war, which is taxing the energies of our country to the utmost. Every year—and more particularly during this great war—the question of population in the country districts is becoming a more serious one, and it is becoming more difficult to see where you are going to get the muscle and sinew from to fight your battles ashore and afloat, to say nothing of tilling the land. What is needed is some attempt to put before the working classes of this country—and especially the classes to which I have referred—a better class of drink than that which now exists, and I think this is an important consideration which should not be lost sight of. How that is to be done is a difficult problem to solve, and I only bring it before the House to urge hon. Members to look into it for themselves. Every instance which I can hear of where a public-house is in private hands, and where the beer is carefully selected, it not only supplies refreshment to the wayfarer, but is also a benefit to the locality. I cannot help thinking that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer, either now or upon some future occasion, will help us upon this question by adjusting the incidence of the duty upon the materials used in making beer he will do something at any rate to bring back to the countryside and to our villages that good old-fashioned sort of beer which was brewed in former times. I am glad to say that beer can be now much better brewed than it was in previous years, owing to improved apparatus. I think if he would do something of the kind suggested to encourage the use of the genuine materials we should in the end derive immense benefit, and future generations would bless the name of the Chancellor of the Exchequer who addressed himself to the improvement of the nation's beer. (Cheers.)

*THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member move his Amendment?

*SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER: No, Sir.

Question proposed, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My hon. friend the Member for Sudbury has for many years, almost ever since he has been a Member of this House, been an ardent advocate of beer made from malt and hops, and he has always supported his argu-

ment with a humour which delights the House, and with obvious sincerity. My hon. friend believes that everything which is good in this country and in our nature is due to good beer, and that everything which is bad is attributable to the want of good beer. I do not think I have heard a finer panegyric on beer since the celebrated song of "John Barleycorn." The actual proposal of my hon. friend is to reduce the additional shilling on beer made from malt to sixpence, and make up the deficiency by a duty of 4s. per cwt. on sugar used in the composition of beer.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has not moved his Amendment. The question is that the clause stand part of the Bill.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am afraid I am not able now to discuss the proposal of my hon. friend. My hon. friend has referred to the Report of the Departmental Committee which, with his full consent, was appointed in 1896. I remember that then we had a debate on the Bill which he introduced in this House on the subject, and the result was that I think he found himself in a not very satisfactory position; and in the end he accepted my suggestion that the question whether the public suffered from other articles besides malt and hops being used in the manufacture of beer should be examined by a Committee. That Committee was appointed, and I had a good deal of communication with my hon. friend on the subject, and I think he assented to the composition of that Committee. I must say that I do not think a better Committee could have been constituted, and it has conducted a long investigation with great patience and care. The Committee came to a decision adverse to my hon. friend's views, and since then the question has rested. It would not be in order to deal with an Amendment which has not been moved, but I do not agree that the barley-growing districts are injuriously affected by the present system. I believe that the best barley commands a good price from the best brewers. What my hon. friend would probably be most anxious about is inferior barley; and he himself is, I am afraid, a grower of inferior barley. Would it be a real advantage to the growers of inferior barley if a penalty were imposed on the use of sugar? The Committee reported—

"The evidence appears to us not to support the conclusion that the disuse of malt adjuncts would increase the demand for British barley, but on the contrary rather to suggest that such disuse might tend to diminish the demand. We have been informed by brewing experts that one of the functions performed by sugar in brewing is the correction of certain defects, common in greater or less degree in all but the best British barleys; and that the same result can be attained by the use of foreign barleys. The effect so far as foreign barley is concerned has been expressed by the popular phrase 'getting sun into the mash-tun.' If, however, sugar were not used, foreign barley would have to be used in larger proportion. In fact, evidence which is practically unchallenged satisfies us that correction of the defects referred to is essential to the efficiency for brewing purposes of the less good qualities of British barley; and it follows that if sugar were not available as a corrective, those barleys would either not be used at all, or would be used only in conjunction with such a large amount of foreign barley as would proportionately diminish the total quantity of British barley used . . . . . There are already powerful inducements to make use of foreign barley, even to the displacement of British barley, and in our opinion these inducements would be strengthened by the prohibition or discouragement of the use of sugar or other malt adjunct."

So far as the barley growers of Great Britain and Ireland are concerned, the proposal of the hon. Baronet to penalise the use of sugar would not improve the position of the British barley growers. If by penalties upon sugar brewers are driven to use foreign barley in the manner suggested by the Committee, the result would be that a very small sum would be derived from the tax upon the sugar used by brewers, and my hon. friend's tax on sugar would fail to benefit the revenue. I feel that I am rather detaining the Committee unreasonably on this matter, because there is no proposal before the Committee, but I thought it right to show that there was an answer to the case put forward by the hon. Baronet. I am obliged to the hon. Baronet for not pressing the matter to a division, because any proposal made by a representative of the agricultural districts to reduce the amount of duty leviable under this clause might be represented as a proof that the agricultural interest is not anxious to bear its fair share of the expenses of the war. I am sure that nothing of that sort was in my hon. friend's mind. The reasoning of the Committee recommends itself to me more

than the views of my hon. friend, who will, however, be able to bring the matter before the House on a future occasion if he desires.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): The House always looks forward to the annual discourse of the hon. Member on pure beer. I am glad to know that the hon. Baronet occasionally leaves the Eastern counties, where, according to him, they brew very bad beer, and, having refreshed himself in Bavaria, returns to this country in perfect form. I am not going to follow the hon. Member into a discussion of these substitutes in beer. The question with reference to this tax is the article upon which it is raised, and the persons upon whom it is going to fall. The relation of brewers to this tax is peculiar. The hon. Member has referred to the deterioration of the fighting capacity of the people being due to bad beer. We used to hear that the battle of Waterloo was won in the playing fields of Eton; now our battles are lost in the public-houses on impure beer. The fighting qualities of the hon. Baronet have also deteriorated. He has regretted that in former days he accepted a Committee instead of taking a division. But the hon. Baronet is no more full of fight now, when he comes forward with a valiant Amendment which he will not move. The reason is plain. If the occupants of the Treasury Bench had been sitting on the Opposition side of the House the hon. Baronet would have gone to a division like a man. But, being coaxed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the hon. Baronet throws overboard pure beer, and the maltster, and the farmer. That is the valour with which the pure beer of Bavaria inspires him. When I increased the duty on beer, the hon. Member for Wimbledon said that, whatever happened, the tax would not be paid by the brewer. Some weeks ago a brewer came to me and asked me what I thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do. I replied that, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is an extreme man, he may propose to increase the duty by 10s. a barrel on beer; but, as a moderate man myself, I should use my influence with the right hon. Gentleman not to raise the duty more than 8s. a barrel. My friend the brewer said that he should be ruined. A ruined brewer was a melancholy spectacle, and so I suggested to him that, having a river in his neighbourhood with a full-bodied water, he might escape ruin after all. It is a notable fact that the brewing of beer is the only manufacture in which the consumer never gets the benefit of a fall in price of the raw material. Though the agricultural industry has been ruined by the fall in the price of barley and malt, the brewers have never altered the price of the beer which they brew. That is a very advantageous situation in which any trade could be placed. It is part of the gospel preached by the hon. Member opposite that whatever happens the brewer is not to lose. The position of this trade is a very curious one, and I would recommend to the hon. Member who has just sat down that there is only one real remedy for bad beer—and that is competition. There is no remedy so good and so likely to secure wholesome commodities as competition. But competition is disappearing from the trade, and the power of the brewer to impose on the consumer exactly what he chooses is the greatest encouragement to bad beer, and that is what is happening throughout the country. One of the most remarkable changes that ever took place in any trade is the monopoly which is going on in the trade, and which, in the slang of the Stock Exchange, is called "combines." Two or three years ago I found, in a Return of the Inland Revenue Department, which I always look at with great interest, that the total amount of sugar used in the manufacture of beer was 2,703 cwts. and malt 57,468 cwts. One remarkable thing was that for years and years I always found that there were only two brewers who brewed over a million barrels of beer. Their names were not given, but I was happy to believe that I knew them. But this year there are ten brewers recorded as brewing over a million barrels; and I should like to know who the other eight are. Unless it is a secret of the Inland Revenue, I should like to know how it is that the brewers brewing over a million barrels have increased by eight. Of course, the explanation of this is the tied house. Enormous sums are given to secure an absolute monopoly in a house, so that the publican cannot buy the beer which he wishes, which his customers would like. The brewers have long been masters of the nation and of the House of Commons, and now they are

becoming masters of the consumers of beer. In former times if the publican could not get good beer from one man he could get it from another. His customer used to say, "I drink such-and-such a beer; will you sell it?" and then he could supply what was wanted. This system has been set up for the express purpose of allowing the brewer to impose upon the publican and the customer exactly what he chooses. I would advise the hon. Baronet to devote his attention a good deal more to that subject than apparently he has done already, because if he would look at the figures here given he will find that that sort of thing is progressing with the greatest possible rapidity. The hon. Member referred to the malt tax in former days. That is one of the most remarkable instances of men suffering from that which they most desire. The agricultural interests according to my recollection for years and years persecuted Government after Government until the malt tax was done away with, and they succeeded in their demand. With the beer tax the brewers got what was called the free mash tun, and all the results which followed came from that change. The brewers have availed themselves of the free mash tun. They have got barley at a price which I should say is 40 or 50 per cent. below what it used to be, and they have pocketed the gain. Then they use sugar, and they put that gain also into their own pockets, but they have never altered the price of beer to the consumers at all. The consequence of that has been enormous profits, of which we can judge by the price of the brewing companies in the market. There are only two commodities now which really yield exceptional gains; one is the manufacture of beer, and the other the manufacture of Maxim guns. According to my observation, I think that they both stand at about 500 per cent. premium. If you take the quotation of Guinness and Vickers, you will find that they stand at about the same point of profit. Then the hon. Member complained that there were fewer men employed in the manufacture of malt than there were. Whose fault is that? It is not that barley is dearer; it is cheaper. Why in the world do not the manufacturers use more barley? It appears that the cheaper barley becomes the less of it the brewers employ. That is a consideration which I think the hon. Member might ponder over before he brings on his next motion for pure beer.

*Sir CUTHBERT QUILTER: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that I pointed out that the decrease in the use of malt was due to the great increase of malt substitutes.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Why is there an increase in malt substitutes when malt is cheaper? You would have thought that there would be less occasion for using malt substitutes when malt is cheaper.

*Sir CUTHBERT QUILTER: It is not so cheap as the substitutes.

Captain PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): It is because the substitutes are cheaper still.

*Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: What I object to is that the brewers should set up as patriots with reference to a tax which they do not mean to pay, and as patrons of the agricultural interest while they throw over malt in favour of sugars. The hon. Member said that this is a very great question; it is a very great question. One of the most remarkable Returns ever laid on the Table of this House was presented about a fortnight ago, giving an account of the alcoholic habits of all countries, and I am sure the hon. Member will be glad to know that England stands *facile princeps* in that respect. I have just taken two or three figures out of the Return with reference to the English-speaking races throughout the world, and the hon. Member will see how proud we ought to be of our supremacy. In the United Kingdom per head of the population we drink 31·3 gallons of beer; the United States drink 13 gallons; the Australian colonies 10·6 or one-third; and Canada 3·6 or one-tenth of what we drink. It may be said that they use other alcoholic drink. Then take spirits. In the United Kingdom we drink now 1·03 gallons; the United States drink ·92, Australia ·76, and Canada ·65. You see how hollow we beat them all. In wines, again, we drink ·4, the United States ·2, and Canada ·08; so that under every head of alcohol we beat the world. The Committee will perhaps be astonished

to learn that, taking Germany as a whole, we drink more beer than the Germans.

*SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER: Not in Bavaria.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is where the hon. Gentleman goes, but if we take the Germans as a whole they drink 27 gallons per head as against our 31. We are therefore the unexampled drinkers of alcoholic spirits in the world. I have taken the English speaking, Anglo-Saxon race throughout the world, and you will find that our Australian colonies, as I have shown, drink only a third of what we consume, and Canada not one-tenth. I am afraid almost to mention what is the cause of it. But perhaps I may be allowed to say that it is because all these peoples as a rule are themselves allowed to determine the question. That is the rule in the United States and throughout the colonies, but your supremacy in drink depends upon the fact that the people of this country are not allowed, as other peoples are, to decide the question for themselves. There is another point in connection with this matter, and that is that whereas in our colonies and in the United States drink is diminishing every year under the influence of popular opinion, in England it is increasing every year, and that very rapidly. There are some curious figures about the consumption of spirits in the United States. Here we have increased from ·92 to 1·05; in the United States it has been exactly the opposite; they began at 1·05 and have diminished to ·92. I will not trouble the Committee with more figures, but I hope hon. Members will look at that Return, which is one of the most remarkable ever presented, dealing with the history of the social and moral condition, so far as drink is concerned, of the countries of the world. If hon. Members will look at that Return they will see that people of our own race beyond the seas are diminishing the evils of drink while we are increasing them year by year. I think when we are discussing the question of a tax upon drink this subject is very germane. The trade can well afford this tax; no one can doubt that. Never was there a trade which could better afford to minister to the necessities of the country; therefore I can support the proposal to place an additional duty of one shilling on beer in a very different spirit to that in which I voted in favour of an increased tax on tea.

*MR. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W. R., Spen Valley): I wish to say a word or two in support of this tax, and to express the hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will increase it in future years and not make it temporary. In justification of that position I wish to state a fact to the Committee which I think has been frequently overlooked. That is that for the first thirty years of this century the tax on beer was double what it is now proposed it should be; in fact it was more than double. In 1830 the Beer Act was passed, the object of which was to encourage the sale and consumption of beer. In those days a delusion was entertained that if you could persuade the people to give up drinking spirits and consume what was then called "wholesome beer" you would make them sober, and the Beer Act was passed to enable houses to sell beer only. Beer-houses were unknown up to that time, and under the Act houses were established where spirits could not be obtained. The result of that was an enormous increase in drunkenness in this country, and within four years a Committee was appointed to inquire into its causes. At the time that the Beer Act of 1830 was passed, something else was done. There was at that time a tax of 10s. a barrel on beer in addition to the malt tax; that tax of 10s. was abolished in order to encourage the sale of beer, and to carry out the view that if more beer and less spirits were consumed, the country would be facilitated in becoming sober. That 10s. was never put back on beer; and the present tax we have on beer is merely a substitute for the malt tax. In 1829, the year before the Beer Act was passed, the total tax on beer, including the malt tax, was equal to 15s. 4d. a barrel; with the increase now proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer it will only be 7s. 9d. But there was a time during the early part of this century when the tax on beer was equal to 19s. a barrel, and there is no reason in the world why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not go a long way further and put more than 1s. a barrel on beer. I hope also the right hon.

[illegible] will [illegible] make [illegible] a temporary tax. There is [illegible] for [illegible] something [illegible] taking [illegible] the consumer [illegible] will [illegible] the brewer in the main. Although the tax on beer has been reduced and the cost of making it has also been very much reduced, the consumer does not get his beer a farthing cheaper. Where has the profit all gone? The greater part of it has gone into the price of public-houses. One of the most marked characteristics of the last twenty-five years has been the enormous increase in the price of public-houses because of the enormous profit which can be made out of the beer sold in them, and as their number is limited, and as new licences cannot be got, brewers are willing to pay enormous prices for houses in which to sell their beer. The diminution of the taxation on beer, and the cheaper rate at which it can now be produced, has gone to enhance the value of public-houses, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do something to divert these enormous profits to the national Exchequer, he would not only benefit the Exchequer, but would also do something to render it more easy to deal with the drink question than it is to-day. It has been suggested that this tax would fall on the consumer; it has also been said by some hon. Members that it would crush out the brewers, and some of the Irish Members told us in pitiable tones of people who would be put out of work owing to breweries being closed. You cannot have it in both directions, and I am very well satisfied in my own mind that the tax will in the main come out of the pockets of the brewers, and that the ultimate result will be to reduce the value of public-houses. Another reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should continue the process of increasing the tax on beer is that the tax on spirits has been increased to a much greater extent than the tax on beer. That is one cause of complaint from Ireland, and I quite agree with the Irish Members who suggest that the tax should be increased much more largely on beer than on spirits. In 1829 before the Beer Act was passed the tax on spirits in England was 7s. per gallon, it is now 11s. At that time the tax on beer was 15s. 4d.; it will now, with this increase, be only 7s. 9d. In other words the tax on spirits has been increased by more than 50 per cent., whereas the tax on beer has been reduced by a half. That is a strong reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should continue to work up the taxation on beer until it is something like the old figure. There is no reason why there should not be a gradual increase which would do something to mitigate the grievance of our Irish friends. I hope, therefore, that instead of considering this increase as temporary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he finds that he requires more money for this war, as undoubtedly he will, will put 2s. or 3s. a barrel more on beer.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): We who represent the agricultural interest have often before had to protest against glib suggestions similar to those to which we have just listened. The hon. Member who has just sat down appeared to forget that this additional tax will fall with very great hardship on others than the brewers. Is it impossible to persuade the hon. Member that this proposed tax will not be felt by those who produce the materials for the manufacture of beer? He seems to think that he may pile on the agony on one branch of trade with which he happens to be in personal dispute, but he leaves out of account altogether how it may affect a large section of the community. That is the narrow-minded way of dealing with these questions, which naturally paralyses all efforts for the reduction of evils of drink, and makes them such difficult questions to deal with, which they would not be if dealt with fairly and squarely, and not in a partisan manner. It is impossible to suppose, if you have a branch of the community enormously interested in providing the raw material for another trade, that an increase of taxation on that trade will not affect the section of the community which produces the raw material. The hon. Gentleman no doubt thinks that agriculturists are blind and stupid, and that if an agriculturist cannot sell his barley he has no reason to complain at all, and in fact that it is a benefit to him rather than otherwise if he could only understand it. We, however, find that the demand for barley is decreasing, and we find that the reason

of that is that other substances are used by those who brew beer, and therefore it is a fact that barley growers do suffer by the increased taxation on beer. In the face of a great national emergency the agricultural interest will not demur to paying its share of taxation, and the agricultural community, of all others, are the least likely to complain. We have seen that evidenced by the magnificent response made in the agricultural districts to the call for recruits for the Yeomanry and other forces. What I wish hon. Members to remember is that this is a question not only of intoxicating drink, but a question which reacts on the condition of the country. It is no exaggeration to say that it is on the barley growing industry that arable cultivation of the country in great measure depends at this moment. Other corn crops are not being grown with any profit at all, and a large section of the agricultural portion of the community look to the possibility of producing a good barley crop for its possible salvation in these hard times. What more does that mean? It means not only the interest of the barley grower, but it means the continual cultivation of a large amount of arable land. That involves the employment and retention on the soil of a large mass of the agricultural population. Hon. Gentlemen on the other side talk glibly of taxing an industry out of existence, but you are also taxing out of existence a large proportion of the population. Reference has been made by my hon. friend who started this discussion as to the effect of the destruction of this arable land on the neighbouring population. I am within the knowledge of every practical agriculturist in this House when I say that the greatest question we have to consider is the reduction of the agricultural population. In my own county it is very difficult to find an able-bodied man between the ages of twenty and sixty. They are all leaving the soil. One of the great questions of the future is undoubtedly the retention of that population on the soil, and yet we are asked to tax one obnoxious trade even if we are to denude the soil of a portion of its population. I object to such a light and airy way of dealing with these questions. I object entirely to impose taxation without recognising what will follow in its train. Of course, people may disagree; it may be said that increased taxation on beer has no effect on the barley grower and has no effect on the agricultural labourer. But on these questions we are the experts and you are the theorists. We have expert knowledge drawn from life-long residence on the soil, and we know what will be the result of certain proposals, and it is not fair to allow this question to be settled by those who do not understand what it involves. I do not in the least suggest that we should hesitate to take up our share of the present burden, but I do say that this continual taxation on beer affects nearly and clearly the prosperity of the barley growers, or, in other words, the farmers of the country, and also affects materially the continued existence of the class of agricultural labourer

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I am not an expert in finance, but only an agricultural Member, and as such I regret that the hon. Baronet did not move his reduction, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable to accept it, because, if he had accepted it, it would be extremely valuable to the barley growers of the Eastern Counties. I do not mean to say that the agricultural interest is dissatisfied with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget, although it is rather difficult to induce them to say that they are satisfied. I think, however, my right hon. friend might have done considerably worse. As far as I am concerned, I have not sufficient flexibility or adaptation to support a proposal which I opposed four years ago when it was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply to my hon. friend last night asked why he did not suggest some alternative. I would suggest an alternative. Why does not the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is a supporter of the temperance question, turn his attention to British wines? Surely it is absurd that manufacturers of British wines, whose products contain alcohol to the extent of 27 per cent., a great deal more than in sherry, should escape taxation, while brewers and manufacturers of British spirits are taxed to the heavy extent they are. The right hon. Gentleman probably does not know that some years ago the First Lord of the Admiralty, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, asked on one occasion, "Who drinks rum?" The right

hon. Gentleman might say, "Who drinks British wines?" I do not suppose he drinks British wines. I do not drink British wines myself; but a good many people do; and I submit that it is a fraud that the maker of gin should be taxed 500 per cent. on his product, while the deleterious stuff turned out by the manufacturers of British wines is practically taxed nothing at all. If these wines were taxed, the produce of the tax might go to the reduction of local taxation. Thousands of acres are going out of cultivation, and I agree with my hon. friend the Member for the Newport Division that the difficulty and danger to the agricultural interest is not so much high taxes and low prices, but the absolute impossibility of getting men to work the land.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: The Board of Inland Revenue furnish an annual Return showing the materials used by every firm of brewers in the country, but that Return does not make public the names of the firms. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would confer a great benefit, not only on the agricultural interest, but on the community at large, if, in that Return, he published the names of the firms, so that the public might know which houses they should go to for their beer if they like their beer made of hops and malt. This question is intimately bound up with that of tied houses; for a large number of public-houses are now the property of firms of brewers. There is no certainty at present as to what these firms of brewers use in making their beer. If it was known that such and such firms only used malts and hops, and other firms maize or rice, or other like decoctions, that would be more effective than a tax on sugar in promoting the use of barley, for sugar is not so much a substitute for barley as maize and rice.

MR. R. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow): It is a great pity that the Conservative party did not deal with the Malt Tax, but unfortunately they left it to Mr. Gladstone, who allowed beer to be made of different materials than malt and hops. It is a remarkable fact that the Board of Inland Revenue tested between 2,000 and 3,000 samples of beer, and did not find a single one to be adulterated; whereas, it is the opinion of people throughout the country that beer is largely adulterated. The explanation of that is that the beer-drinkers do not like the beer made from maize and rice. When the Commission was appointed they did not take the evidence of the "man in the street," who is really the best judge of beer. The men in this House may be very good judges of anything else; but very few are good judges of beer. Farmers and labourers are of opinion that beer made from maize and rice gives them a furred tongue and headaches in the morning, while beer made from malt and hops makes them do their work all the better. It was due to the right hon. the Member for West Monmouth that labourers were allowed to brew their own beer, free of duty, if they lived in houses of £8 rent or under. In my own constituency there are 1,200 labourers who brew their own beer. I think we are much indebted to the right hon. the Member for West Monmouth for what he said about tied houses. There is no doubt that if we had only one beverage to drink in this House, we would soon strike against it. If we had more competition we should have better beer.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I do not propose to follow hon. Gentlemen opposite in their discussion of the war policy. We are discussing the war tax, and there seems to be a difference of opinion as to who should have to pay it. I recollect that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth proposed to increase the beer tax in 1894 he said it would be a tax on the brewers, and that they were well able to afford it; but the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer says that his beer tax will fall on the consumer. It seems to me that those gentlemen who discuss the profits of the brewing trade forget that a large proportion of that trade is now organised in public companies. A few of the larger corporations do carry on their operations with profit which exceeds the average; but I have a Return taken from the official register of all the public brewing companies, and I find that it works out a profit of something like 8 per cent. on the capital. One of the important witnesses before the Royal Commission stated that the average profits, in his

experience, upon the total capital employed in breweries was only 6½ per cent. When you include in the breweries one or two larger corporations where the profit is very much above the average, it will be seen that the average profit is not excessive, while some companies earn a very small profit indeed. It must be remembered that the directors of these public companies have the interest of their shareholders to consider, and have to determine in what way the tax is to be met. During the last twenty years there has been an increase of 40 per cent. in taxation on beer. The first beer duty was 6s. 3d. per barrel, but in 1889 the standard of gravity was lowered from 10·57 to 10·55, which was equal to an increase of taxation of 3d. per barrel. In 1894, when the duty was increased by 6d. a barrel, it stood nominally at 6s. 9d. per barrel, but in reality at 7s.; and the shilling now proposed to be added will bring the tax up to 8s. a barrel. Corresponding with this increase of taxation there has been, as is well known, a decrease in the price of materials. There have been fluctuations in the price of all agricultural produce, but the fluctuation, on the whole, in the price of barley has been a decrease. No doubt the decrease in the price of materials has been brought about in many instances by a larger resort to substitutes for barley, and the price of barley had to follow its rivals to a lower level. Then, some brewers have not been careful in maintaining the density of the ales to the exact standard, and perhaps some have lowered the standard; but in my opinion the limit of that process has been reached, and no further reduction can be made in the cost of production. A considerable quantity of material is used which is too cheap from the point of view of quality, and I do not think it will be possible, with our present knowledge of chemistry, to use any cheaper materials and yet maintain the standard of the ale. As to whether the tax is to be paid wholly by the consumer or wholly by the brewer, it appears to me that the limit to economy in manufacture having been reached, a large proportion of the tax will, in the ordinary course of trade, be cast on the shoulders of consumers.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 223; Noes, 31. (Division List No. 85.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. S. (Hunts.)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Brist'l)
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bill, Charles
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Colville, John
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fry, Lewis
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
Gold, Charles
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St Geor's
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)

Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbt. E.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mount, William George
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Myers, William Henry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs S W
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighsh.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, J (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Ta'nt'n
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Woods, Samuel
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'n. C.
M'Dermott, Patrick
Morris, Samuel
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Parnell, John Howard
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Clause 7 :—

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, in moving to leave out "United Kingdom" and insert "Great Britain," said: Whatever view might be taken of the matter from a temperance point of view, it might be generally conceded that it was a most unfair thing to put this additional tax on whisky, in view of the fact that, while it was manufactured in Ireland, no whisky at all was manufactured in England, the consequence of which was that Ireland suffered very heavily from it. The views of the Irish representatives were already well known, and, therefore, it was useless to labour the question; but there was no doubt whatever that the tax of sixpence

a gallon on Irish whisky was altogther disproportionate as compared with a tax of a shilling on English beer. Such a tax would lead to a very appreciable increase in the price of whisky, whereas the shilling tax on a barrel of beer, though it might cause some increase in the price, would be almost infinitesimal compared with the increase which the consumers of Ireland would feel in the matter of whisky. No doubt the hon. Member for South Belfast and others who put temperance reform almost before any other question, would welcome the increased taxation, and no doubt that would be quite a legitimate proceeding provided it could be shown that the additional taxation would lead to decreased consumption, but everyone was perfectly well aware that it would do nothing of the kind, for the reason that those who liked to drink whisky would not be deterred from doing so because they had to pay an increased price for it. The history of the taxation of whisky in Ireland was somewhat curious. According to the best figures obtainable, the tax upon whisky in 1853 amounted to 3s. 4d. a gallon. Since that date it had been more than trebled. In 1853 an additional tax of eightpence was put on by Mr. Gladstone, which was fol- in 1854 by a further addition of 8d., and this in its turn was followed in 1858 by an additional tax of no less than 2s. 10d., which was imposed by Sir Geo. Cornewall Lewis. The tax then stood at 8s. a gallon. In 1860 it was again increased to 10s., at which figure it remained for thirty years up to 1890. It was further increased by 1s. in 1894, and in 1895 6d. was knocked off by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire on the distinct promise by that Gentleman that the reduction would only be temporary. From that it was painfully apparent that Irish whisky had been taxed to the utmost extremity. It was a popular idea in this country that Irishmen drank a great deal more than other people, but nothing was more untrue, and to say such a thing was a slander on the Irish race, because the figures at the disposal of the House of Commons would prove conclusively that the consumption per head of alcohol was far greater in Great Britain than in Ireland. The consumption of whisky was about the same, but the consumption of beer in Great Britain was thirty gallons per head as against sixteen gallons per head in Ireland. The result of the continual increase of the taxation of whisky in Ireland had been to very greatly decrease the prosperity of that country, as would be seen from the fact that, in 1835, Ireland possessed ninety-one distilleries, a great many of which had now disappeared. Everyone, whether they were temperance advocates or not, must admit that the decrease in the number of distilleries was a sign of the decreasing prosperity of the country. Years ago a very large trade existed in the distillation of whisky in Ireland, giving employment to a large number of people, but with the decrease in the number of distilleries that employment had largely disappeared. In the year just closed, about 4½ millions of gallons of whisky had been produced in Ireland, the increased taxation on which would mean £116,988. Such an amount to the Irish people generally, who had to pay it, was a very serious matter, and it was most unfair that such an enormous sum should be placed on one of the few remaining industries of Ireland. This tax could not be said in any way to promote the cause of temperance, because however high the tax on whisky might be, it would not prevent those who so desired from drinking it, but it would discourage the whisky-producing industry in Ireland and by so doing would be likely to throw a great many out of employment. In view of the way in which, ever since 1853, Irish whisky had been taxed, and having regard to the decreasing number of distilleries in Ireland, Irish Members could not view without alarm the proposals now made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The matter had been so thoroughly threshed out that it was useless to labour the subject. In conclusion he would make an earnest appeal to the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the facts to which he had alluded, and also the fact that distilling was one of the few remaining industries in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman could not find some other commodity on which to place this tax; or, if indeed he must tax Irish whisky, he would make the tax more uniform with the tax on beer, the brewing of which was an English industry.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 29, to leave out the words 'The United Kingdom,' in order to insert the words 'Great Britain' instead thereof."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'the United Kingdom' stand part of the clause."

MR. FLYNN, in supporting the Amendment, said he did not wish to occupy the time of the Committee at great length, as others who thought with him also desired to speak on this important subject. It appeared to him that the Treasury regarded this tax as one which could be stretched to any extent they desired. A man whose name was before the public very much at the present time had stated before the Financial Relations Committee that the tax on spirits was from two-thirds to three-fourths of the price of spirits, whilst the tax on beer only amounted to one-sixth of the price. It was under those circumstances that the Government now proposed to impose a further tax of sixpence a gallon on Irish whisky. One would have thought that the taxation of spirits had been carried far enough. For eighty years it had been intermittently increasing, and only once, in 1894, was it reduced, and then only by sixpence a gallon. In 1835 the tax on spirits in this country was 7s. a gallon, and to Ireland 2s. 4d.; in 1858 it was, in England, 8s., and in Ireland for the first time the taxation was assimilated, and the tax there was raised to 8s. also, and it now stood at 10s. 6d. a gallon. From 1810 to 1899 the taxation had been increased ninety per cent., though starting from 1835 the increase on taxation in whisky amounted to something like 400 per cent. It was a strange and significant fact, in view of the debate upon the Bill before the House, that every article which was more commonly consumed in Ireland than elsewhere was subjected to the heaviest tax. It might be a coincidence, but it was nevertheless true, and such coincidences told against the resources and prosperity of the Irish people. It was obvious from the history of the country that the large increase in the taxation of Ireland was due to the legislation from 1850 to 1860, when the taxation was assimilated and the income tax extended to Ireland. In the General Report of the Royal Commission there were some remarks by Mr. Sexton, who said that whether tea, tobacco, beer, or whisky were luxuries——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must confine himself to the clause before the House.

MR. FLYNN pointed out that he was endeavouring to do so. The arguments of the advocates of the tax was that whisky was not a necessity. Whether tea, tobacco, beer, or whisky were luxuries or not was a question which could not be answered. The question was, whether in selecting articles to be taxed articles should be selected which were more commonly consumed in different countries. The English national beverage was beer. The House had heard a most glowing panegyric on the subject of pure beer from an hon. Gentleman on the Government side of the House, and Irish Members might sing the praise of good Irish whisky. On beer only a shilling a barrel was going to be imposed, but on a gallon of whisky the tax was to be sixpence. There was something very paltry in the way in which this taxation was imposed, and there was something most unfair in the position taken up by the predominant partner in the matter. It was said that this tax would press no more hardly on the Irish people than on the English, but the reply to that was that whisky was more commonly consumed in Ireland than in this country, and the result was that instead of having an indiscriminate taxation in Ireland it was carefully discriminated as against the man who drinks whisky. It was owing to the high duty placed upon whisky that such an increased quantity of new and impure and bad spirit, which mostly came into Belfast, had been put on to the market. When the distillers were able to make a good article and to bond it, the consumers obtained a sound article distilled from malt, and not burning spirit. Within a year something approaching a million of money had been paid in duty in Belfast on what was termed silent spirit (proof) imported into Belfast; to this burning spirit Irish whisky was afterwards mixed, and it was exported to England as good Irish whisky. A spirit made on the continent from foreign grain, maize, and potatoes, was imported into Belfast at one shilling a gallon duty and exported as good Irish whisky or Highland whisky—and all the corruption and adulteration from which the trade was now suffering, and which led

e most frightful abuses, was due to ıigh duties on whisky. When sixty ı ago the duty on Irish whisky was d. a gallon, there was a phrase coined there was not a headache in a hogs- of it, which meant that if a man was ɜh or greedy enough to drink to ɜs, so pure was the spirit and so little leleterious effects that the next day ll effects were felt. It was now non knowledge that there was a vast ınt of bad spirit placed on the ɛet, which had a most pernicious t on those who consumed it in too ı quantities. It was this spirit that ıly accounted for the squabbles which rred in the Irish markets, and for a large amount of the ry which occurred in the towns ngland. The hon. Baronet asked ; was a pure spirit. He took it that ıre spirit was one that had been ined from pure malt by the pot still ɜss, which was sufficiently matured in bond, and, of course, in wood, so that the original impurity, commonly called fusil oil, should be chemically decomposed. He did not know what the hon. Baronet would think of the pure spirit he had endeavoured to describe. He had heard that if a man was fatigued a drop of honest Irish whisky or Highland whisky, mixed with a little distilled water or pure water, was a far better drink than any cup of tea or coffee that could be got. If alcohol was to be consumed in any form it was better that it should be pure. At present they held up a temptation to every distiller to put on the market an article that paid them, but which was injurious to the health of the people of the United Kingdom.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 146; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 86.)

AYES.

ham, William (Rhondda)
ı, William (Gateshead)
dale, Edward Mervyn
ld, Alfred
l, Sir William
nson, Rt. Hon. John
in, Sir John (Yorkshire)
ie, James E. B. (Inverness)
l, John George Alexander
ɔur, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
ɔw, John Emmott
ley, George C. T.
h, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Charles
on, Alfred
l, Edward
sy, Albert
rick, Rt. Hon. St. John
ard, Sir Harry
ıs, John
her, John George
well, James
ndish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
ley, Frederick
l, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
nberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm
nberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
ɔlin, Rt. Hon. Henry
rington, Spencer
s, Octavius Leigh
ıill, Douglas Harry
ngs, Rt. Hon. Jesse
mb, Sir John Charles Ready
ton, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
ille, John
wallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
s, Alexander (Glasgow)
ɔn, Viscount
keith, Earl of
ymple, Sir Charles
ıy, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G J (St. George's
Graham, Henry Robert
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Holland, William Henry
Houston, R. P.
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Knowles, Lees
Lambert, George
Lawrence, Sir E Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverp'l
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.

Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wallace, Robert
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woods, Samuel
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr M A (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Question proposed, "That Clause 7 stand part of the Bill."

MR. DALY said he believed that this particular clause would strike very hard against Ireland as compared with England. He found that if beer was taxed in proportion to its alcoholic strength with whisky, at least three times the tax would be put upon beer. He wished to remind the Committee how fairly the American Parliament taxed beer with regard to the late war. They put a dollar on the barrel of beer, whereas the Chancellor of the Exchequer only put on 1s., while 6d. was put on the gallon of whisky. Sir Edward Clarke was an eminent authority to whom great respect would be paid in that House. He stated that if an Englishman expended £4 2s. on drink, he only paid 15s. 6d. taxation, whereas if an Irishman expended £2 15s., he gave to the taxation 13s. 6d. The hon. Member thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been badly advised in adding to the duty on whisky. He could only protest against this tax.

MR. FLAVIN thought Irishmen were fully justified in opposing an increase in the duty on whisky. The present duty was 10s. 6d. per gallon, and that was too high. If he might be permitted, he would point out that in his humble judgment the Government was not justified in placing an additional duty on an article of consumption upon which the present duty was 300 or 400 per cent. of the actual value.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman except when he is repeating, as he now is, what has been said by the previous speakers. There is a rule against repetition, and I warn the hon. Gentleman that he must not repeat the arguments used by previous speakers.

MR. FLAVIN said that having been absent from the House he was not aware that any other speaker had brought before the attention of the Committee the comparative amount of duty levied on whisky in Great Britain and other countries. He saw from a Return that the duty levied on whisky in the United Kingdom would be 11s., as compared with 6s. in Germany, 5s. 6d. in America, and 2s. 6d. in France. That was in itself a startling fact. The tax in the United Kingdom would be 500 per cent. more than in France. In Ireland they felt that the addition of 6d. per gallon on whisky was even a greater injustice than the additional tax on beer. The amount of beer manufactured in Ireland was nothing as compared with whisky. In the consumption of alcohol they were below the average per head of the population of any part of Great Britain. It would seem that the ordinary working man in Ireland preferred whisky to beer, and if he paid 4d. for a glass 300 per cent. of that money—

3d. out of every 4d.—if the resolution was carried, would go into the Imperial Exchequer. Instead of getting redress from the Imperial Government, they were now asked to increase their large contribution for Imperial purposes. Ireland contributed 15s. 11d. per head of the population, and with a decreasing population and increasing taxation was it any wonder that they should say that they were entitled to exceptional treatment and certain abatements under the Act of Union? It seemed to be a continuous stream of taxation, so far as Ireland was concerned. They had increased the taxation on tobacco——

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon Member, I hope, will not pursue that line of argument. I have warned him already not to repeat anything that has been said by those who preceded him.

Mr. FLAVIN: With all due respect, I have not discussed the question of tobacco; I only mentioned it.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause 7 stand part of the Bill.

MR. FLAVIN: Then it is our duty and our right to stand up and make these protests.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will continue his remarks upon the clause. He must not discuss the action of the Chairman.

MR. FLAVIN: I am not questioning your authority at all. It is our duty to stand up here and make these protests against the increase of taxation. We have no other means of showing that we are doing our duty towards our constituents unless we stand up and make a protest against what we think not only an unreasonable but an unfair addition to the taxation. I consider the duty on whisky excessively high already. We know the purpose for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer asks the increase, but we cannot consider his position or the position of the Government. What we have to consider is our position as Irish representatives, and we have to prevent the increase of taxation on the Irish people as a whole.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 126; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 87.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Barlow, John Emmott
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bill, Charles
Billson, Alfred
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burns, John
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Colston, Charles E. H. A.
Colville, John
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stan. W.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon, Viscount
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Graham, Henry Robert
Gretton, John
Hamil on, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hardy, Laurence
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Holland, William Henry
Houston, R. P.
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kenyon, James
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Sir E Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Leng Sir John
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverp'l)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W)
M'Killop, James
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Pretyman, Ernest George

Purvis, Robert
Pym. C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Hon. W F. D. (Strand)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woods, Samuel
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Blake, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hayden. John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. MA (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Molloy, Bernard Charles
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power. Patrick Joseph
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Clause 8 :—

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) formally moved to omit Clause 8.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : I think the clause placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for West Islington is an improvement on the clause which deals with the subject in the Bill, and I will therefore agree to this Amendment.

Question, "That Clause 8 stand part of the Bill," put and negatived.

Clause 9 :—

Question proposed—"That Clause 9 stand part of the Bill."

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) : In formally moving my Amendment to omit Clause 9, I hope I need do no more than take this opportunity of thanking the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the willingness with which he has, since the original debate on the Budget, considered certain objections which were pointed out to him by myself and others in regard to the proposed stamp duty on brokers' notes. I thank him for the courtesy and attention he has shown in listening to the arguments put before him by deputations from the London Chamber of Commerce, and some provincial chambers of commerce, for the right hon. Gentleman has spared no pains to arrive at the gist of the real questions at issue, and to see that there was some foundation for the objection raised against this matter. I hope the result of the representations made to him upon this subject, and his further inquiries into it will convince him that, while the revenue would not have gained materially from his proposal, on the other hand, trade would have been greatly inconvenienced by it. Under these circumstances, knowing as I do how much regard he has for the commerce of the country, I trust he will see his way not to persist in his proposal, but to allow this clause to be omitted. I think the thanks of the whole commercial community are due to him for having heard so patiently what has been said upon this subject, and for having expressed his willingness to remove objections if they really existed, and to listen to anything which was advanced in the interests of commerce.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH : I am obliged for the hon. Member's reference to what I have done in this matter. I have been convinced by the further information that has reached me that the proposed duty would not have the effect I intended. My desire was that the tax on produce brokers' contract notes should be precisely of the same kind as that on Stock

Exchange contracts. I have, however, been satisfied by the information conveyed to me by the deputations from London, Liverpool, and Manchester, and from other sources, that the effect would not be the same, for whereas the stamp duty on Stock Exchange transactions is paid by the parties to the contract, it would, in the other case, practically have to be paid by the produce brokers. This is due to the fact that, while the Stock Exchange is a close corporation, the produce market is an open market in which others besides brokers can take part. I do not propose to press the matter further, though I never considered that it would have such an effect on trade and commerce as the hon. Member for Islington seems to think. It is not a very great financial matter, and I will only add that I do not propose to make any further suggestion to Parliament on the matter this year, but I will see if I can deal with it upon a future occasion.

*MR. WARR (Liverpool, Toxteth, E.): As I had the honour of introducing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a deputation representing commercial interests in Liverpool, I should like to associate myself with what has been said by my hon. friend the Member for Islington, and to acknowledge the courtesy and consideration which has been shown by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this matter, and to assure him that his action will be highly appreciated by the commercial community in Liverpool.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I do not know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made it very clear to the House that this tax should not fall upon the broker. There is one point about which we have had no explanation, and that is how the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to fill up the gap created by the abandonment of this clause. I think he estimated that it would produce £150,000 a year, but I have been told that the product would have been enormously larger than this estimate. I have been told this by people in the trade. At all events the loss of £150,000 a year does create a serious gap in the financial proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the short speech he has made he has given us no indication of the steps he intends to take for filling up that gap.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The revenue of the present year has been even more productive than I anticipated. There will, therefore, in all probability, be an increase from various sources which will more than make up the £150,000 at which I estimated this tax.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I desire to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon having consented to the omission of this clause, because I think it shows a disposition to entertain representations of a reasonable character. I hope this augurs well for certain suggestions which I have put on the Paper. This tax was estimated to produce £150,000 a year, and it has been stated that that estimate might be a mistake. If it only produced that amount it must be wrong. This is a little illustration of what I ventured to point out the other day, and that is the weakness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with high commercial finance. I think if there had been a little city knowledge in the Treasury this tax would never have been proposed. The tax was no sooner proposed than its uselessness was demonstrated. I only rose to congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon having shown such a readiness to recognise his mistake and withdraw from the position he took up.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): There is one word which has not been said about this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that he did not consider it would be necessary in this Budget to replace this tax by some other. I take it that he has decided to make a clean withdrawal of it. He has told us in his short speech that he intends to return to the subject next year. I think we ought to have some additional information about these stamp duties and their result, and I should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to grant a Return about them, especially as he has said that it may be necessary to return to this matter a year hence. When one looks at this question as it stands in the Return there are a couple of pages of small print about stamp duties of almost every kind, and why they were put on I do not think

any man knows. It would be a good thing if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give us an opportunity of studying the matter by furnishing a Return showing the produce of these taxes, so that the country may understand them when any proposal of this kind is brought forward in the future. I desire to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the complete way in which he has withdrawn his proposal.

Clause put, and negatived.

Clause 10:—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that before moving his Amendments he wished to ask the Attorney General what view he took of them, and whether he could accept any one of them. The third one was the Amendment to which he attached most importance.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 26, to leave out the words 'or any other person.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It may be convenient for me to state here that it is not possible for the Government to accept any of these Amendments.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES, in moving a further Amendment, contended that the words he proposed to add were necessary because, although the whole estate might not pass, the whole duty might be charged. If that was already secured without these words, he did not wish to move, and if the Attorney General would assure him that that was so he would withdraw his Amendment. It seemed to him that unless those words were introduced there might be some ambiguity, and his proposal was simply an amicable suggestion.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 29, after the words 'death of the deceased,' to insert the words 'to the extent to which a benefit accrues or arises by the cessor of such estate or interest.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That these words be there inserted."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said that these words were not necessary, and if they were inserted they would have no effect, and would not achieve the object which the hon. Member had in view.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that after what had fallen from the Attorney General he would not press his Amendment, and asked leave to withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said he proposed to introduce a drafting Amendment, as it had been pointed out that the words in the section might otherwise be insufficient. He proposed in line 30 to insert the word "divested" after "assured." The other alterations would be purely consequential.

Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES moved to insert in line 34, after the words last inserted, "by the deceased." He said that the whole history of the twelve months limitation which was applied by the original Act as to bestowing property before death, showed that it was never contemplated to charge duty in such a case as was now proposed. It was assumed that when a gift was made twelve months before death, whether the donor knew he was dying or not, was a *donatio mortuis causa*, or a gift with the object of defeating the purpose of the Act, and in consequence it was provided by the original Act that the assumption should be made that everything a man gave away twelve months before his death should be deemed a *donatio mortuis causa*, and charged with duty. But there was a limitation. The Act of 1894 never did charge any duty whatever on any transaction such as was contemplated by the section. It was not a section to meet evasion; evasion in such a connection was nonsense, and the section imposed a new death duty altogether. It was shutting an opening left in the Finance Act of 1894, and a

new duty was being imposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who distinguished himself by an intermittent opposition to the Bill of 1894 while in Committee. He contended that it should be proved that the gift was a death-bed gift, and that they should not throw the thread of their assumption over the last twelve months of the man's life. If a man gave a bracelet to his wife or a rebatement to his tenant, or put a gift in the plate at church, the assumption now was that such a gift would be charged with duty. Settled property for the last six years was not charged with duty. When the Act was first passed the Inland Revenue Officers who were charged with its construction thought the duty ought to be charged, but in the only two attempts made, it was held by the courts that duty was not chargeable when a man surrendered his life interest, even within twelve months of his death. It was now proposed to extend to settled property the same assumption which existed as regarded personal property. If a man possessed a life interest and transferred it to the remainderman, that was to be treated as a fraudulent attempt to evade the law, otherwise there was no meaning in the clause. He maintained that the transfer should be by the deceased himself, and unless the deceased had divested himself of his property it was absurd to extend the assumption in the manner proposed. Take the case of property settled on A for life, or, in case of bankruptcy, on his wife and children with remainder to C. The wife and children surrendered to C within twelve months of A's death and A had nothing to do with it. Was there any reason why duty should be charged in such a case? But the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to charge it on the assumption that A had done an act in which really he was not concerned. He (Mr. Gibson Bowles) was not a lawyer, but unless he could get a better explanation than had previously been given him, he should have to press for the inclusion of these words.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 10, page 5, line 34, after the words last inserted, to insert 'by the deceased.'" —(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said he really could not accept the disclaimer of knowledge on the part of his hon. friend, because out of the House he was always writing to the papers to show that he, and he alone, was able to put the law officers of the Crown right. [Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: That is not true.] If his hon. friend were not a lawyer, he was certainly better than half a lawyer. He was very glad to receive the criticisms of his hon. friend, and would also be glad, if possible, to meet his views. He was not going to talk about fraud or evasion with reference to the clause; there was no moral or other obliquity in not paying a tax which was not due, and if a man did not come within the terms of the Act he was not bound to pay the tax. Avoidance of the Act was perfectly legitimate, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was doing his best to stop the possibility of avoidance where it was intended that the tax should be chargeable. There was no question of a new tax of any kind. The position was very simple. Ever since the Act of 1881, if a man possessed of £100,000 worth of Consols first within three months, and now within twelve months of his death, gave them away with no idea of evading the tax, the estate did not get out of liability to duty. A somewhat anomalous state of things arose after the passing of the Act in 1894, owing to two cases in which the House of Lords decided that, though a man only gave away a life interest and thereby prevented events happening which would have rendered the tax payable, still the life interest was to be deemed not to have been given away. That their position was logical could not be disputed, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was only putting settled property as far as he could in the same position as free property, and to provide that the fact that a man gave away £100,000 within twelve months of his death did not prevent his executor from having to pay estate duty. There was no intention whatever of imposing a new duty; they were simply stopping a hole which had been left open when the Act of 1894 was passed, and which ought to be stopped, on every principle of equality and justice. If he might speak on behalf of the Inland Revenue authorities, he was very much obliged to his hon. friend for having pointed out the necessity of keeping in the words "or any other person,"

for his hon. friend very ingeniously pointed out what might have happened if a life interest had been transferred to a third person. His hon. friend had shown in his speech that it was absolutely necessary to retain the words "or other person." He could not understand why, if a life interest were surrendered or conveyed away within twelve months of death, it should not be liable to pay duty as if it had not been disposed of at all. He thought his hon. friend would see that it was not intended to impose a new tax, and also that he himself had made it perfectly clear to the House that it was necessary to retain the words to which he had referred.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 36, after the word 'assurance' to insert the word 'divesting.'"—(*The Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'divesting' be there inserted.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said before the word was finally added to the section he thought the Committee should understand what it really meant. The Finance Act was the most complex Act on the Statute Book, and he himself could not remember its contents for two consecutive days. It was full of pitfalls for the unwary, and it had struck him that there might be some danger in the word "divest." He quite understood the objects of the clause, and had nothing to say against its policy, but he thought the introduction of the word "divest" would extend its scope somewhat further than perhaps was meant. The words already in the clause "surrender, assurance or disposition," contemplated a voluntary surrender, not a surrender in the sense of being made for valuable consideration, but an act discharged of the free will of the person surrendering. What he feared was that the word "divest" would cover the class of case in which the divesting was effected by the operation of law, without any reference whatever to the person divested. The clause was intended to deal with the case of a life interest with remainder to a friendly party, where the tenant for life and the remainderman combined to get rid of the estate duty, but it was quite possible that the remainderman might be a hostile party, in which case there would be no combination and no danger of the revenue being defrauded. It might also well happen that a person might have it in his power to take the estate during the life of the person who had a life interest in it and without his consent. There was, he understood, some method in English law in which a debt could be enforced against a life interest even to the extent of putting up that interest for sale. Under such circumstances it would be very unjust to treat such a transaction as if it were a voluntary transfer, and he thought the word "divesting" would cover that class of case. The words already in the clause were wide enough, and there might be some danger in the word now proposed.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said that the word must now be inserted, because otherwise the clause would not read correctly; but he would consider before the Report stage whether any danger might attach to the introduction of the word. He would take the best opinion he possibly could as to the meaning of the word.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11:—

MR. MAURICE HEALY moved to delete the first sub-section of Clause 11. He thought the fourth section of the Finance Act of 1894 was very just, and there did not seem to be any ground whatever for altering it. As he understood its effect, it was that if a man had two estates, one his own and the other only a life interest, which would pass at his death, not in virtue of any disposition made by him, but by a disposition of the original owner, who might be a total stranger, then, according to the Finance Act of 1894, the two estates would be separately aggregated. What was unjust and unreasonable in that to induce the Government to make a change? He thought it was a great hardship to impose a tax upon heirs, or next-of-kin, of a deceased person, merely because the deceased was, during his life, the owner of an estate which at his death passed, not to next-

of-kin at all, but to strangers. The present law was just, reasonable, and equitable, and there was no ground whatever for the proposed change.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 3, to leave out sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

Question proposed; "That sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I can assure the hon. Member that this matter has received the most careful consideration, and that there is a general agreement that this sub-section is necessary in order to prevent the inequitable working of the Act of 1894. I may say that the matter was inquired into by a Committee on which I had the honour of sitting with my friend the Member for the Woodbridge Division, the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs, my hon. and learned friend the Member for Haddington, and the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue; and the Committee unanimously recommended that this change in the law should be made. I think I can explain in a very few words why the change is necessary. The general law provides that all property is aggregated, but from that an exception was made by a proviso in the Finance Act of 1894. That proviso was no doubt intended to benefit the immediate family of the deceased, but it was so curiously worded that it has had in practice the effect of benefiting collaterals; and therefore property which goes to a stranger was not aggregated. There is nothing to justify such an exceptional advantage being conferred upon collaterals which is not conferred upon the immediate family of the deceased. Suppose that settled property passes to the eldest son, and the free property to a younger son; aggregation takes place. The clause, however, is so worded that property passing to the several sons is aggregated, while there is no aggregation of property which passes to a collateral, even though that collateral takes all the free property. It is impossible to allow such a state of law to continue.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the Solicitor General had forgotten that if the collaterals benefit by the segregation of the property, so did the lineals, for the effect was to diminish the rate of duty all round. The whole point of aggregation lay in this: that by aggregation they increased the rate of duty under this blessed, beneficent, heaven-sent system of aggregation invented by the right hon. Member for West Monmouth. He could not, for the life of him, understand why this sub-section was introduced, unless it were as another screwing up of the Act. When they were on the other side of the House, when the Act of 1894 was being passed, they encouraged the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he had in turn encouraged them, to resist it, and they had discussed it for long and weary months; but no sooner did the right hon. Gentleman get into office than he went clean over to the enemy. It reminded him of the 450 prophets of Baal, and he alone was left to serve the Lord. Now why was this desire to screw up the Act at this point? What the Act did was to aggregate all the property which passed at the death of the deceased, with a certain exception—the property in which the deceased never had any interest whatever. What was proposed was not to exempt from duty the property which the deceased never had, but from aggregation with other property which he did have. He was aware that that sounded like a passage from a comic opera, but it was the fact. Also, if there was any property which, under some settlement not made by himself, passed by his death to people other than his own family, then that was not to be aggregated. Now, mark what that meant. Brown left property for life to Jones, and on Jones's death to a hospital, say, for distressed Chancellors of the Exchequer, or for an epileptic asylum. But when the life tenant died there was an absolute extinction of his whole interest in it. Why should that be aggregated with his other property? Now came in the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who proposed to get rid of the saving clause This matter of aggregation was no new one. Again and again he had proposed that the property disposed of by the deceased should be aggregated together to make one estate, which either belonged to the deceased in fact, or which belonged to him in effect. It was quite right that that should be aggregated, but not otherwise, so as to raise the rate of duty. He believed that that was the only logical solution of this very difficult

question of aggregation. The Solicitor General did not defend the clause. What he said was that it had been drawn up by a Comm ttee. Let them look at the constitution of that Committee. First of all, there was the Solicitor General himself; then there was the Attorney General and the late Attorney General, who was one of the wicked authors of the Act—the one man to whom it was owing the Act passed through the House on account of his amiable methods of making concessions. Then there was the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire, who was no better than one of the wicked; who, indeed, invented Clause 2 over the comedy of which the Attorney General and the First Lord of the Treasury never tired of making jokes and gibes, although they did not think it a matter of joking now. Then there was the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, who was an interested party; and there was a noble Lord who had gone out to serve in South Africa, who, of course, was a satellite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They considered his Amendment, which he had put down again and again, suggesting what he considered to be the only true and fair method of aggregation; and they reported that it would make great inroads on the death duties. He was informed that they privately said that his Amendment was the only logical solution, but in their published Report that did not appear, for of course they felt that it cut the ground from their own amendment. He had another and a last argument. As he had said, he had always urged that the aggregation should be confined either to the property which the deceased owned himself, or to property of which he had the power to dispose, and of which he did dispose. But that was nothing like so far as the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the virtuous days of Opposition, proposed; namely, to have separate aggregation for every separate settlement. The Attorney General said on the 7th June, 1894, with that air of authority which the Committee remembered so well—

"The Committee stood face to face with this difficulty, that the Government were seeking to aggregate properties of a different kind"—

exactly the same thing as he had said—

"with different incidents, and the control of which rested in different hands. The only practical and sensible method of dealing with the case was to require that property passing by settlement should be aggregated separately."*

Now that was just what he had said; but the argument which the right hon. Gentleman made use of in 1894 seemed to become weak and inadequate in 1900. What had happened to him? The argument addressed to the House by the right hon. Gentleman had actually led him first to suggest the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman and his colleague now united to reject. He was surprised, he was shocked, at seeing those two right hon. Gentlemen now proposing to adore the very gods they had burned, and to burn the gods they had adored. He was shocked to see them proposing to take away the very necessary and proper exemption of 1894, and to screw up the Act which, in their opinion, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire had made too indulgent to owners of settled property.

*Mr. BUTCHER (York) said he was sure the Committee would have some considerable sympathy with the mental attitude of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who was so shocked and pained at the sub-section of the clause under discussion. He confessed that, to him, the spectacle of his hon. friend being, according to his own account, the only man left in this country who served the Lord, and had not bowed down the knee to Baal, was so affecting that he felt bound to get up and address the Committee. The principle of aggregation was exceedingly complicated, and unfair in operation. That resulted from the erroneous financial basis on which the Act of 1894 had been founded. Instead of proceeding on the sound and reasonable view of taxing what a man received—on the principle adopted in all the Colonial Taxing Acts in relation to death duties—that Act proceeded on the irrational and illogical basis of taxing what a man left, or what he was deemed to leave. In proceeding on that footing they were lost in absurdities. Having adopted the deplorable and peculiar system of aggregation, it became necessary to make certain exemptions. When they aggregated two estates the necessary result was that they increased the taxation

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxv., p. 653.

on both; but when they segregated two estates the necessary result was to diminish the taxation on both. Therefore you have this curious result, that, though you may be perfectly right in diminishing the rate of taxation on one estate, you are forced at the same time to diminish the rate of taxation on another estate, on which you desire to have the taxation undiminished. Take this illustration. There may be a large estate which goes out of the family on the death of the tenant for life, and a small estate that will remain in the family. If you say those estates shall not be aggregated, the rate of taxation is diminished on both. It may be perfectly right to say that the rate of taxation on the small estate which remains in the family shall be diminished, but it may be wrong that a large estate going out of the family should have its taxation diminished. Yet if you diminish the taxation in one case, you necessarily diminish it in the other case. On the other hand, the result of aggregating the two estates is that both bear the same rate of taxation. The fact is that so long as you retain the principle of aggregation at all, it is impossible to avoid certain cases of unfair and unjust taxation. My hon. friend has just given an illustration in which this unfortunate result has occurred; but even my hon. friend's Amendment would not remove all anomalies. Having given the best attention I can to this matter, I have come to the conclusion that the proposal embodied in the Bill diminishes many of the inequalities of the Act of 1894, and on the whole, I think it is a fair compromise, and on that ground I support the proposal in the Bill.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: What we have heard from the hon. gentleman the Member for King's Lynn gives a general impression to the Committee that this clause as here proposed is an increase of duty, but one must read both sub-sections together; you cannot read the one without the other, and the effect of that is that so far from being an increase of duty, it is really, on the whole, a relief. But whether it be an increase or a relief, it must be plain to the Committee that the proposal is of a temporary character, because this aggregation that is to be dealt with is an aggregation on the passing of property on the death of the tenant for life, and the estate must be subject to estate duty. But by the Bill of 1894 no duty is payable on settled estates except on the first passing of the property, and that must come into operation on the death of the first settler, and where the death of the settler comes after 1894, no estate duty or aggregation at all can take place on the death of the tenant for life, so that all these hardships exist only in the imagination of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, because if there be no duty and no aggregation it follows that there can be no hardships.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that there is in Sub-section 1 no alteration of the duty—that there is no duty payable in the case of a person who died after the Act of 1894?

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: There is one case only in which settlements are made after 1894 where duty must be paid by the tenant for life, and that is where the settler and the tenant for life have transferred the property by consent; then, instead of the death of the settler being the first passing of the property, the death of the tenant for life became the first passing, because the transfer of the property was an act of their own for their own purposes and benefit Though I should be the last to suggest the imposition of a penalty in such cases, I do not think it is for the Committee to allow an exemption from aggregation in those cases in which there has been a transfer of property from one to another for the simple purpose of avoiding the payment of duty. That is the only instance where the duty can be paid by the tenant for life after the passing of the Act of 1894, but in the other cases, before the passing of the Act, the death of a settler was regarded as the same as the death of a tenant for life, and the duty had to be paid. The hon. and gallant Member for King's Lynn by this Amendment proposes to abolish all aggregation on property passing on the death of the tenant for life. No doubt there are many cases of great hardship on an estate passing to collaterals which is not only not aggregated, but, on the other hand, is separated into as many parts as there are collaterals; no aggregation takes place on the separate parts, and throughout it has to bear an expense which is certainly uncalled for. Again, supposing the property passes under settlement to the eldest son, and the savings

of the tenant for life pass to younger children, the amount of those savings is largely increased by aggregation, because the eldest son gets the settled property. But, on the other hand, if there are no children and the property passes to a brother, or cousin, or distant collateral, no aggregation takes place, and the property is divided. It was at the instance of the noble Lord the Member for the Biggleswade Division of Bedfordshire and myself that Amendments were introduced last session and the year before with a view to this being amended. Those Amendments were intended to deal with an extremely complicated and difficult question, and although they appeared practicable at the time, I am bound to say now that they were impracticable. This Amendment of the hon. Member is logical and practicable, but it goes too far. It is desirable to find something which is logical and practicable, but which does not go too far. I do not know whether I should be in order to refer to Sub-section 2, but without doing so it is impossible to deal with this subject. What that does is this; it puts aside all questions of collaterals and lineals, questions which underlie a very desirable object, because it is only in the previous Clause 4 that the relationship is introduced at all. It is entirely foreign to the contents of the Bill, and it is undesirable to introduce it. In regard to the passing of property on the death of the tenant for life, where the settler died before 1894 the aggregation only relates to half the property; so that the grievance of the hon. Member reduces itself to this: that where the settler died before 1894 the aggregation is limited to half the property, and consequently the increase of duty to which the hon. Gentleman referred cannot be such a hardship as he suggested. Where the settler's death has occurred since the Act of 1894, neither duty nor aggregation can under any circumstances be appreciable, except where the parties themselves for their own purposes and benefits have transferred the property from the death of the settler to the death of the tenant for life. The Committee will see that the matter is in their own hands, and it is for them to say whether there is any hardship. The hon. Member has referred to me as a satellite. I hope I have not been nebulous; it is a nebulous subject; but this Amendment does to some extent remedy the inequalities of the duty, and I ask the Committee in the interests of the taxpayer to support it.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I have listened to the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and so far as I can see I entirely fail to trace the bearing of his argument at all. The hon. and gallant Gentleman dealt with my Amendment as if I was moving to mitigate the evil of aggregation. It is the Government who are increasing the evils of aggregation. It is not I who am seeking to introduce any new principle in the Finance Act. It is the Government who have chosen to propose an alteration in the law which has a great tendency to aggravate the evils of aggregation, which the hon. gentleman the Member for King's Lynn has so ably explained. I cannot say that I am myself opposed to aggregation in any form. I believe it to be a principle which is perfectly sound and just, and, where there is a settled property and a free property passing, it is quite right to aggregate the two properties, even though the property passes to distant collaterals. That one property passes by settlement and the other by will makes no substantial difference in the case. They are both methods by which the deceased parts with his property, and the question in this case is what property the deceased leaves. All that I am attacking by the Amendment I have before the Committee is the unjust extension of the principle which is set up by the proposals in this Bill. This particular case was, I take it, considered when the Finance Act was before the Committee of this House in 1894. Nothing that the hon. and gallant Gentleman has said can affect the case, except in one particular. I quite admit that he has demonstrated the one possible case in which it would be unjust to apply the exemption created by Section 4. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has said that this clause was intended to protect collaterals. If that is so, it was not necessary. I would not say the protection of collaterals in all cases is unjust. If a man has settled property which passes to collaterals, and a free property which passes to lineals, it is very unjust to tax the collaterals more heavily than the lineals, so no doubt there is in a case of that kind something to be said in

favour of protection. But even so, it should be effected by a simple clause framed in an entirely different manner to the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. What he says is this—that, because collaterals in one case get a benefit which it was not intended that they should get, lineals must be deprived of all benefit. That does not appear to me to be a just method of dealing with the matter, and, so far from the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Gentleman being an improvement, I think the proposals of the Finance Act are far more just and practicable. I can conceive that, in a case where a collateral takes both properties, you might deal with it by a sub-clause, by which the amount of duty which he would have to pay might be reduced. There is only one case in which a collateral derives a benefit which it is not intended he should receive, and to deprive him of all benefits because of that appears to me to be most unjust.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): Although I accept the proposition in Sub-section 1, the Committee will see that the possible increase in the rate of duty may inflict some hardship on a certain class. Since the passing of the Act of 1894, there have been frequent dealings for money or money's worth with such interests, always, of course, on the hypothesis that the property dealt with is subject to the duty of segregation. It would be manifestly unfair if the duty were now increased on such property or charge. This is a matter which only applies to the purchase or mortgage of property between the passing of the Act of 1894 and this Bill, and the proposal that I desire to make is simply this. That such properties as have been sold or mortgaged for money or money's worth since the Act of 1894, up to the passing of this Act, shall not be subject to any increase in the rate of duty in the case of sales, and in the case of estates mortgaged during the same period, the increase of duty arising from aggregation shall not impair the validity of the mortgage, but shall come as a second charge after the satisfaction of the mortgage. The Solicitor General prefers to have an Amendment which follows more exactly the lines of the Act of 1894 in similar cases, and therefore I propose to move this Amendment instead of the one which appears in my name on the Paper. It effects the same result, which is to protect from an increase of duty such properties as have been sold between the Act of 1894 and the present date, and to ensure in the case of mortgages that the increased duty should come as a second charge after the satisfaction of the mortgage.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 7, after the word 'interest' to add: 'Provided that where an interest in expectancy in any property has before the passing of this Act been *bona fide* sold or mortgaged for full consideration in money or money's worth, then no other duty on such property shall be payable by the purchaser or mortgagee when the interest falls into possession than would have been payable if this section had not pa sed; and in the case of a mortgage any higher duty payable by the mortgagor shall rank as a charge subsequent to that of the mortgagee.'"—(*Mr. Courtney.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I prefer to accept the Amendment now proposed by my right hon. friend to that which is on the Paper. He has now followed closely an analogous clause of the Act of 1894, and under those circumstances I desire to say, on behalf of the Government, that they will offer no opposition.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It is intended first of all by this Amendment to give up the principle that duties are a first charge on the property, and they are to be regarded as a second charge.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: If the hon. Gentleman looks at the Act of 1894, he will see a clause there in precisely similar terms.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: That is to say, wherever there has been a bargain, or wherever a sale has taken place under circumstances where it would be liable for the death to occur, those cases should be treated differently. Surely the Solicitor General must have failed to recollect that in the case of all settled property and realty the charge for duty is the first charge on the estate. It is a little difficult to follow what was said at the Table, but I certainly gathered that under the circumstances provided for by the Amendment the charge for duty comes after the mortgage charge.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: The extra duty.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then there will be not only a segregation of property, but a segregation of duty. I am afraid the Ireland Revenue officials will find some trouble in working the provision.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES called attention to the involved phraseology of Sub-section 2, remarking that those who invented this proviso really never could have asked themselves what the effect would be. He illustrated what the effect would be by stating a concrete case—that of a man dying in 1900, after the passing of this Bill—for he presumed it would be passed—and leaving three sums of £9,000 each. Under the proviso 3½ per cent. would be paid on one £9000, while 4½ per cent. would be paid on the other two sums of £9,000, although all came on the same person's death to one person. It seemed to him that the effect of the sub-section was ridiculous. On the same man's death 3½ per cent. was paid on one portion of the property, and 4½ per cent. on another portion of the property. He was trying to find out why that should be. He could see why it should not. It was said that any other proposal than that contained in the sub-section would involve loss to the revenue, but it was not so. He had ascertained that the loss to the revenue would be extremely small, because about seven-eighths of the property that passed on a person's death passed under disposition made by the deceased person himself.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Gentleman wish to move the Amendment which stands on the Paper?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: No, Sir, I will not do that.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said the question was really a very simple one indeed. He thought that everyone would agree that the natural and normal point for segregation was the death of the settler. In cases where the settler died after the Finance Act came into force, the estate duty was chargeable upon his death. In the concrete case stated by the hon. Member, the hypothetical person who died leaving the three equal sums of £9,000 died before the Finance Act came into force, and therefore no estate duty was asked. If that person had happened to die after the Finance Act came into force, the estate duty would have been aggregated with his other property. He hoped the Committee would consider that the abatement that had been allowed was not unreasonable.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 12:—

MR. MAURICE HEALY complained that the Inland Revenue authorities had in six years changed their minds no fewer than three times on this trumpery matter. It seemed to him to be playing very low down when dealing with a Budget of £120,000,000.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said the intention of the Act of 1896 was that where an estate which consisted of three parts amounting in the aggregate, he would assume, to £30,000 odd, the fractions should be excluded from that aggregate. In practice, however, the fractions had been excluded from the separate parts of the estate, with the result that the reduction had been altogether beyond what was intended. The object of the Amendment was to prevent that result.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13:—

MR. MAURICE HEALY: When dealing with the previous clauses we have argued, and I think justly argued, that the taxes press hardly and operate unjustly on the Irish people, because the incidence of indirect taxation is much more oppressive on that side of the Channel than it is upon this, and in putting before the Committee the Amendment which I have now to submit I do not at all recede from that position. The Chancellor of the Exchequer attempted last evening to raise a controversy between my hon. friend the Member for North Islington and the right hon. Member for North Tyrone, alleging that the right hon. Member for North Tyrone had given his benediction to the portion of this Bill which imposes an increase of the income tax, and in that way had

somehow come to a different conclusion from that which the hon. Member for North Islington had come to. I do not think there was any real conflict between the two hon. Members. I think my right hon. friend the Member for North Tyrone said that if any tax was to be imposed on Ireland at all in connection with this war, a direct tax, such as the income tax, no doubt operated less oppressively and affected more the well-to-do class of people than the indirect taxes on whisky, beer, tea, and tobacco, included in the previous clauses. It is argued from that that we are justifying the imposition of the income tax on the country in connection with the war now being waged. If I am open to the objection which I have pointed out, that our arguments hitherto from this quarter of the House have been in favour of direct taxation as opposed to indirect, I, at any rate, have an advantage in pressing this Amendment on the Chancellor of the Exchequer which my hon. friend did not possess. His great argument against any differentiation between the two countries in these indirect taxes was that it would involve the *bête noire* of a customs barrier, and would be an attack in some way upon the unity of the three kingdoms. In dealing with the Amendment I am now putting forward I can be met with no such argument. The concession I am now asking from the right hon. Gentleman will not involve a customs barrier, and will involve no attack on the integrity of the Empire. Ireland was exempted from the income tax for many years after the Act of Union was passed, and no one can contend that the statesmen who so exempted it would in any way have been parties to anything that would impair the union of the three kingdoms. I am afraid, however, that, though the right hon Gentleman will not be able to fall back upon that argument, he will have another quite as ready to his hand and perhaps much more valid. I do press upon the Committee that from the point of view of the social condition of Ireland, and from the point of view of the financial relations between the two countries, and from the point of view of the circumstances under which this tax was originally imposed, Ireland has an enormously strong case for the exemption which I now claim. The income tax was first imposed upon Ireland in the year 1853, and under very remarkable circumstances. It is impossible for anyone to read the speech in which Mr. Gladstone introduced that proposal in the Budget of that year to the English Parliament, without being filled with indignation, and it requires all the recollection of the great services that illustrious man in his later years conferred upon our country, to enable us to forget the enormous injury he inflicted upon Ireland by the legislation originated in that Budget, and aggravated by successive Budgets of subsequent years. I put it to the Committee that this income tax is essentially a tax of that character which is covered by the phrase "exemptions and abatements" occurring in the Act of Union and also the legislation of the year 1817. If there is a possible case in which that phrase is to have any meaning, and if any benefit is ever to extend to Ireland from its use, it is the case of the income tax. In urging that position on the Committee I would mention the fact that Mr. Peel, when he reenforced the income tax on Great Britain after an interval of nearly thirty years, deliberately exempted Ireland from the scope of the tax, conceiving that Ireland was not then in a position to bear the burden that tax involved. When Sir Robert Peel came to that conclusion in 1842, Ireland had not passed through the dreadful ordeal of the famine. Ireland in 1842 was, I will not say a prosperous country, but it certainly was a country much more prosperous than the Ireland of ten years later, on which Mr. Gladstone for the first time imposed this tax, and it does fill me with astonishment and amazement that within five years of the awful agony of the famine which so reduced the population and sapped the vitality of our country, that great man should have been so regardless of the condition of our country as to introduce the income tax in that year. There is something connected with the imposition of the income tax upon Ireland which involves a great reflection upon—I was going to say the integrity and honour of this House. The income tax was expressly imposed upon Ireland by Mr. Gladstone by virtue of a sort of bargain. Mr. Gladstone, in imposing that tax, proposed to grant to Ireland a benefit which would more than compensate her for the mischief done by this imposition. He described the state of misery to which our country had been reduced by the

awful experience of the famine, and said that that must be taken into consideration. How did this House proceed to take into consideration the "awful visitation of the famine," and "to relieve Ireland from the relation of creditor and debtor"? It proceeded to impose a burden exactly twice as great in amount as that from which Mr. Gladstone relieved Ireland. Mr. Gladstone estimated the amount of the Consolidated Annuities from which he was relieving Ireland at £245,000, and he told the Committee that he hoped the income tax would bring in about £460,000. Mr. Gladstone defended that proposal by saying that the annuities would exist for about thirty or forty years, while the income tax would last only seven years. But, as we know, instead of coming to an end after the lapse of seven years, the income tax has been levied every year since then, and last year it produced in Ireland, not £460,000, but between £700,000 and £800,000, while under the present Budget the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer hopes to extract by this tax about £900,000. In the face of that history, I think we in Ireland may be pardoned if we are inclined to protest against this increased imposition. It may be said that, whatever can be urged against indirect taxation, no valid argument can be produced to justify the exemption of Irish direct taxpayers from any burden which is imposed upon the English direct taxpayer similarly situated. I do not for a moment admit that. The bulk of this income tax is a tax upon Irish trade and commerce. We all know that, compared with the enormous volume of that of England, the trade and commerce of Ireland are very insignificant indeed, and that a burden which the ever-expanding trade of England can bear without feeling may operate in Ireland so as to be insupportable and wholly injurious to the trade of that part of the Empire. The Returns of the collection of the tax are the best proof of that argument, because they show that while in England the right hon. Gentleman can always calculate upon a steady increase of the produce of the income tax, it may be regarded as substantially stationary in Ireland. I do not admit that, because they are nominally assessed at the same amount, equality of impost necessarily means identity of burden. It may be said that this is a tax upon the rich, and that there can be no more harm in taxing the rich people of Ireland than in taxing the rich people of England. But we have too few rich people in Ireland to be able to afford that they should be taxed in this way. I do not admit that the poor man is not injured by such taxation. The rich often create the means by which the poor live, and any additional tax upon the rich man is in, my opinion, a drain upon the resources of the poorest classes of the community. I therefore press this Amendment upon the notice of the right hon. Gentleman. When two years ago the Government were relieving the Irish landlord, they took very good care not to give that relief by exempting him from the income tax; they did it by sacrificing the local body, and they secured that exemption for the landlord at the expense of the local rates. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 32, after the words 'Income Tax,' to insert the words 'Great Britain.'"—(*Mr. Maurice Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. and learned Member has just made a speech in direct contrast to all the speeches we have heard from those benches on the previous items of taxation mentioned in the Bill. In regard to tea, tobacco, beer and spirits, we have had complaints that we were increasing the indirect taxation of Ireland which was already too heavy, and which affected injuriously the consumers of these different articles. At one time the hon. Member for Waterford went even so far as to say that he did not complain of the income tax at all—that he was willing to give us the income tax and a certain amount of indirect taxation as well if we would let Ireland off the rest. It is perfectly clear that the burden of the complaints of hon. Members below the gangway opposite on this subject of taxation have not been with regard to the direct but the indirect taxation of Ireland. We are practically asked to abolish income tax in Ireland altogether. The reason for that request is, that in 1853, when the tax was imposed by Mr. Gladstone, a sufficient consideration was not given to Ireland in

return. I do not think we need enter into the history of those days. The question is, whether the income tax, as now applied to Ireland and Great Britain, is a fair thing or not in the case of Ireland. I must say this, that if the income tax had not existed in Ireland, and I was obliged to seek some fresh source of taxation in Ireland, there is nothing to which I should look so confidently as regards fairness and justice, as the application of the income tax to Ireland. Why should the rich merchant princes of Belfast and the shareholders in Guinness' Brewery in Dublin, not pay income tax on the profits of their industries, just as much as the poor shopkeeper in London, or Birmingham, or Glasgow, or Edinburgh? The proposition seems to me, with all respect to the hon. Member, to be almost absurd. As I pointed out to the House the other day when we were discussing the question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland, there do exist at the present time exemptions and abatements in Ireland, such as the house tax, which is a very considerable tax in Great Britain——

MR. MAURICE HEALY: How much?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: If the house tax were extended to Ireland it would be a very sensible addition to the income tax. Then there is the land tax, all of which applies to the class who pay income tax.

MR. FLAVIN: Why did you not give us the whole of the agricultural grant?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: What has that to do with the question? Hon. Members were very glad to accept that £400,000 when it was offered to them. They might have preferred that it should be divided in a different way, but that has very little to do with the question of whether or not income tax should be paid in Ireland. Of all the Amendments which have been proposed from the benches opposite I think this is the one which demands the least sympathy and the last I should be disposed to accept.

MR. LOUGH: I should like to say one word on this question. It is a settled question no doubt, but there is more to be said for the Amendment than the Chancellor of the Exchequer appears to have appreciated. The argument of my hon. friend is that in a very poor country where you have very few rich men it is not good policy to tax those rich men out of existence. The Returns with regard to income tax in the three countries—England, Scotland, and Ireland—are most interesting in this connection. In Scotland we have a country we can compare with Ireland, because it is about the same in population. From those Returns I gather that of incomes over £50,000 a year there is only one in Ireland, while in Scotland there are twelve. Of incomes between £10,000 and £50,000 there are but twelve in Ireland, against 121 in Scotland, so that again, in a country of the same size, there are ten times as many as in Ireland. Of incomes between £5,000 and £10,000 there are in Ireland only thirty-two, so that altogether there are only forty-five incomes of over £5,000 assessed to income tax in Ireland, while in Scotland there are 368. That is a very substantial difference, and the proportion is practically the same in England. The Committee marked the glowing allusion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the "merchant princes of Belfast." There are very few merchant princes of Belfast. In the whole of Ireland, as these figures show, there are only forty-five people who pay on more than £5,000 a year as against 368 in Scotland. This is my point. Perhaps not to-day or to-morrow, but some day, this House will awake to the fact that something must be done for Ireland to deal with the economic crisis you have there. The country is going in exactly the opposite direction to the rest of the United Kingdom. I have shown how few rich people there are there now, and the number is growing less day by day. The result is that you cannot get capital for any enterprise; there is no initiative in the country; and I believe that in the economical condition of Ireland the sufferings of the rich—which, of course, are very different from those of the poor—are just as serious a factor in the situation as the sufferings of the poor. I have had an opportunity of mentioning these points before, so that I need not labour them now, but I do think that this Amendment deserves a

great deal more consideration than it has received.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 29; Noes, 165. (Division List No. 88.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bond, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gibney, James
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q.'s C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
Parnell, John Howard
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Allison, Robert Andrew
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bainbridge, Emerson
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George

Caldwell, James
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colville, John
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Curzon, Viscount

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dyke, Rt Hon Sir William Hart

Emmott, Alfred

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)

Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geor's
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron

Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, James
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)

Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)

Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees

Lawrence, Sir E Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverp'l)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverp'l)
M'Killop, James
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milner, Sir Frederick George
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute

Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian

Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay

Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Joseph A (Northumb.
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John

Purvis, Robert

Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hon Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt Hon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)

Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley

Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray

Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon E. R (Bath
Woods, Samuel
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 14:—

MR. FLYNN moved to report progress. He contended that very satisfactory progress had been made with the Bill, and it was not reasonable that Members should be asked to continue the consideration of such a Bill after midnight, especially as many Members had been at the House since noon. The Irish representatives had been endeavouring to protect the interests of their constituents, and they were now fairly entitled to a little respite.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the House will agree to continue the sitting a little longer. I believe we have now reached a point beyond which there is little that can be called matter of contention. We have had a great deal of discussion, and many divisions have been taken with regard to the additional taxation as it affects Ireland, and hon. Members opposite have had a full opportunity of expressing their views. We have now arrived at a part of the Bill which has no bearing on questions of that kind. There is no further Amendment affecting Ireland, and, as regards the proposed new clauses, I do not think they should occupy more than about half an hour. It is always understood that the proceedings on the Finance Bill may be continued beyond the ordinary hour of adjournment, but last night we reported progress by twelve o'clock, and I really must ask the Committee to continue for a little while longer to-night, as other business has been fixed for Thursday to suit the general convenience of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) was amazed at the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was now Wednesday morning, and at noon the House was to meet to consider a Bill dear to the Tory heart, namely, that dealing with the flogging of the lower classes, but he and his friends desired to refresh themselves in order to oppose that Bill later on in the day. It was bringing legislation to a farce to discuss large financial measures after midnight, when Members could not be reported, and, if they were, they could not be so bright or clear as if they discussed the measure after a few hours rest.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I hope there will not be any prolonged altercation over this matter. I quite admit that the Irish Members have discussed the points which affected them in a particular way with some latitude for the last two days, but there still remain upon the notice paper nine new clauses to be disposed of. Surely the Chancellor of the Exchequer will admit that it is somewhat unreasonable to expect us at this time of the morning to go through the whole of those new clauses. What I would suggest, with great respect, would be this: We have passed Clause 13 of the Bill, and there remain only Clauses 14, 15, 16, and 17, to which no Amendment stands upon the Paper. I think it would be a reasonable thing if the Chancellor of the Exchequer got those clauses passed and then reported progress, so that we could deal with the new clauses at a

subsequent sitting. I certainly think the argument of my hon. friend below me is a reasonable one. We have to meet at noon to-day to discuss a Bill which interests the House generally, and that being so I think it is a little unreasonable to ask us to deal with nine new clauses to-night. I am not making these remarks at all with the desire to obstruct the passage of the remainder of the Bill. I sincerely believe that that passage will be facilitated if this concession is made now. Certainly so far as the Irish Members are concerned we have no desire to prolong the discussion, but questions may arise on those clauses which will have to be discussed. Therefore I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should get the remaining clauses of the Bill and then report progress, and I make that suggestion with the conviction that when the Bill is again taken up a small amount of time will be sufficient to go through the new clauses.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My reason for desiring to continue the sitting was this: My right hon. friend the Leader of the House has made an arrangement with right hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the business on Thursday, and I hoped that by finishing the consideration of this Bill to-night it would have been in the power of the Government to secure that that arrangement should be carried out. I have, however, had enough experience of this House to know what happens when there is a wrangle about reporting progress, and therefore I think it would probably be better to accept the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. FLYNN: On that understanding I will with pleasure withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 15, 16, and 17 agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4:—

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for adjournment, in reply to an hon. Member who asked whether the remaining clauses of the Finance Bill would be taken on Thursday next—

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's Burghs) said: Owing to the unfortunate circumstance of our not being able to complete the Committee stage of the Finance Bill to-night, it will be obvious that it must be the first Order for Thursday, in pursuance of the undertaking of the Leader of the House that this stage should be proceeded with *de die in diem* until completed. The other Orders of the day we hope will be taken in the same sequence as has been foreshadowed by my right hon. friend, but in his absence I am unable to say whether the Government will be able to adhere to the undertaking that the Resolution dealing with the Education Code shall be taken at a given hour, as it was hoped would have been possible if hon. Gentlemen opposite had been able to co-operate with us to-night.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): Do you intend to take the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill on Thursday?

MR. ANSTRUTHER: Yes.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve of the Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 28th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE BILL.

As Amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords] [STAMP DUTIES].

Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of certain Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present Session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow. —(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

PETITIONS.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

Petition of the Romilly Society, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Peebles, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MIDWIVES BILL.

Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Hastings, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Walker; Hartlepool (three); Hastings; Ponder's End; Dollar; Blackburn; Motherwell; Worthing; and Bolton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Seven Petitions from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Bollington (three); Dollar; Blackburn; Stony Stratford; Bolton; and Harrogate; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Cupar, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of General Report and Statistics for the year 1898, Part IV., Colonial and Foreign Statistics; Statistics relating to Persons employed, Output, and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the British Colonies and in Foreign Countries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ALIENS.

Return presented, relative thereto (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 140, of Session 1899) [Address 31st January; *Mr. Jesse Collings*] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.]

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.

Accounts presented for the year 1899, with an account of extraordinary Works executed other than the general Repairs for the same period [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES).

Copy presented of Rule made by the Irish Land Commission under the Land Purchase Acts, dated the 19th March, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) ACT, 1896 (RULES).

Copy presented of Order in Council, dated 22nd March, 1900, amending the Railways (Ireland) Order, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CHINA (No. 1, 1900).

Copy presented of further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of China [in continuation of China (Nos. 1 and 2, 1899)] [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

further dealt with, and it may inflict punishment in the shape of a longer term of imprisonment in addition to an order for whipping. A person wandering abroad and occupying premises without any visible means of subsistence, a poor unfortunate man who has no means of support, and who lies outside, can, if the justices were foolish enough to do it, be sent to the Court of Quarter Sessions to receive a sentence involving whipping. Another case is when a man leaves his wife and children without the means of support; if the Court thought fit, it could order that man to be whipped. In these days of public subscriptions another case deserves very serious consideration indeed. Any person who is gathering alms can be dealt with under this Act. A good many of us have applied for subscriptions in various ways, and it would be inconvenient to be dealt with under this Act and sentenced to be publicly whipped. There is another offence under this Act—and I am sorry I do not see the right hon. Member for Thanet here. Any man found betting in a public place is liable to be whipped—not such a place as Mr. Hawke and his kindred spirits sought to disestablish, but, as I read the Act, any public place. That would possibly open the eyes of the supporters of the turf. Then we come to that offence for which the punishment of whipping is occasionally tried—that is the very gross and disgusting offence of exposure of the person. I shall have a word to say about that directly, because it is so germane to the subject before us to-day that I think the House may well consider that, when considering the abolition of the penal Act in regard to flogging. I recollect quite well, in my own experience as a magistrate at Quarter Sessions, a man being sent up by the court below to be further dealt with, who was, I should think, almost insane on this matter, although not sufficiently insane to be shut up in a lunatic asylum. That man was in the habit of annoying and disgusting decent women by this beastly passion. When he came before the Quarter Sessions it was clearly shown that he had been convicted more than ten times, and the case was so bad that my brother magistrates felt willing to inflict the punishment of whipping on that man. I had tried no less than four cases of the most abominable indecent assaults upon little children—little children that I had to put on the bench with me. They had been outraged and knocked about and ill-treated in different ways by four different brutes—I will not call them men. I could not order flogging for these men, and I said to my brother magistrates: "I think you will agree with me that when the law does not allow us to inflict the punishment of flogging on men who outrage children in this way, it would be wrong to do it for an offence which certainly is, in my opinion, a minor offence to that for which these men were brought up." I am happy to say they did agree with me, and we inflicted a sentence of further imprisonment on that man, but did not inflict flogging. I think there is sufficient reason for the repeal of the portion of the Act which awards whipping to rogues and vagabonds. I come to another Act, and it is the only other one I will trouble the House with. It is a very important Act, and I am happy to see some gentlemen from Ireland here. It is an Act which many of them possibly, and perhaps law-abiding people generally, have never read and are unaware of. It is an Act of William IV., almost every section of which provides for punishment by whipping in addition to the sentence of imprisonment. Any person who sends any message or letter inciting to riot, or demanding alms, or requiring any person to quit the service of another person, may be once, twice, or thrice publicly or privately whipped. Section 2 provides that any person who inflicts any injury on cattle or crops, or procures any person or incites any other person to commit any injury to cattle or crops, may be ordered to be once, twice, or thrice whipped. I think everybody will agree with me that the punishment of whipping is out of all reason, looking to the offence. We cannot approve of any of those acts, and they ought to be punished according to their degree and extent, but I think the punishment of flogging in that case is absurd. I have quoted three Acts to show the House that at any rate with regard to the repeal of flogging in certain cases common sense demands it. Let me go a little bit further into the offences for which the punishment is inflicted at the present time. I will deal with the matters that the Bill provides for as regards the retention of the punishment—that is in relation to highway robbery, and especially garroting.

I have seen a good many cases at assizes, and I have had a good do with the trial of such crimes. not believe in single-handed rape, drugs are used or the woman is in of hysteria. I remember hearing get fourteen years penal ser- in a case of rape, and I it was no more a case of than of pocket-picking. There was case in which a man got twenty penal servitude, and I think he was punished. The man was guilty morality, no doubt, and I do not there ever was a worse act of than that. There may be cases single-handed rape, but I do not in them. We expressly exclude this Bill single-handed rape. I say for the punishment of whipping to inflicted in cases of rape there must be violence shown, or there must be or more people engaged in it. That show the House that so far as I am concerned I am wishful to approach this subject in a fair way to the criminal. I to protect the person charged from possibility of unfair play. As far as concerned I am only too anxious to safeguards into the Bill which would only protect a man from punishment the lash, but also protect him in other as well. We know that there is too of the abominable crime of black- going about. It is absolutely necessary not only to protect him from lash, but to protect him from punish- other than the lash. The Bill also with the crime of indecent assault. this matter also I have had personal ex- rience as chairman of Quarter Sessions. do think that if hon. Gentlemen had half the experience I have had in ying cases of assault upon little ildren they would see the necessity what is proposed in the Bill. I ve seen little children not higher than y knee brought into Court to tell their d story, and what are you to do in such cases under the law as it stands to-day? You can only inflict a long sentence of imprisonment with hard labour. There are those who say that the lash is brutalising. No doubt it is. But I have seen a good deal of the inside of gaols, and I cannot help thinking that a long period of solitary confinement is, in the case of an uneducated man with a low type of mind, quite as likely to be brutalising, and indeed more likely to have that effect than a short sentence of imprisonment accompanied by the lash. My belief is that the lash would prove a deterrent in the case of this particular class of criminal. In the case of abominable crimes I can only say that, should the majority of the House prefer to exclude them from the operation of this Bill, I shall be prepared to assent to that course, as really our desire is to secure the power to apply the lash to assaults upon the person. I am not going to weary the House with quotations from authorities, but I would like to remind it that in 1889 Mr. Matthews, in a speech in this House,* said he believed from his own experience in the criminal courts—and as we know he was no mean authority on the subject—that flogging was a deterrent. He also declared that the law required consolidating, and that is one of the objects of this Bill. Again, Sir Henry Selwyn Ibbetson, a former Under Secretary to the Home Office, gives his support to this Bill, while yesterday, at a meeting of the Society of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, under the presidency of Lord Cross, another ex-Home Secretary, the principle of this Bill was unanimously approved after a very friendly discussion. I may be met with the argument that a Bill like this is calculated to promote blackmailing. Well, I am prepared to accept any Amendment which would lessen the chance of that. But unless the punishment of flogging is inflicted for outrages upon women and small children, I say the sooner you sweep away corporal punishment altogether the better. These crimes are usually committed by tramps, and how does your present law operate? A woman, rich or poor, while out on a lawful errand is knocked down by a tramp and robbed of her purse and basket. The law says her assailant may be flogged. But if, instead of stealing her purse or basket, he takes what is more valuable to her than life itself, the law says you shall not flog him. I say it is absolutely horrible that such a distinction should be drawn. If hon. Members are so averse to corporal punishment, why have they not brought in a Bill to abolish it?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): We abolished it in the Army and Navy.

* May 8th, 1889. See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cccxxxv., page 1459.

immediately committed precisely the same offence. I was instructed to defend the man at the second trial, and when I visited him in his cell I found that his one object was, not to avoid another flogging, but to be saved from being sent to penal servitude. The jury declined to convict him of the serious offence of robbery with violence, and merely found him guilty of stealing the money. It is strange that if this form of punishment is so highly beneficial it is not adopted in other countries; but there is scarcely a country in Europe where flogging is allowed—I am not referring to prison discipline—I believe it is not allowed in America, and our colonies have never taken to it. If anything has been proved to be a delusion it is the statement that garroting was put an end to by the Act of 1863. Lord Aberdare, who was Under Secretary at the time that Act was passed, said himself that the results attributed to the passing of the Act had, in fact, been realised before it was passed. In a speech made by Lord Herschell, when he was a Member of this House, he said it was the prevalent opinion that the punishment of flogging acted as a great deterrent in cases of crime with violence, and that it had put down garroting. But if anyone would examine the Returns which had been laid on the Table of the House, it would be seen very clearly that garroting was practically put down before the Act was passed. In fact the statement that the Act was instrumental in suppressing it has been shown over and over again to have no foundation in fact. In 1885 the House declined to sanction this cruel and degrading form of punishment, even in reference to offences against women and children. There was a long debate upon it in that year,* in the course of which Sir Henry James, Sir Edward Clarke, Sir Farrer Herschell, Sir Horace Davey, and Sir Thomas Chambers all protested against this form of punishment. Now, I have one or two observations to make with regard to the punishment itself. In the first place, it is the most unequal form of punishment that one can possibly conceive. Take the case of two men flogged. Probably the one who feels the punishment the least is the worse man of the two. It is not only the most unequal form of punishment, but it is also the most uncertain. Look at the Returns which have been moved for from time to time. There is nothing more prejudicial, nothing which is so injurious to the interests of justice, than that there should be great inequality in sentences passed by judges for the same offence. Returns show that from 1883-1899 Mr. Justice Day ordered prisoners to receive 4,061 strokes with the cat. The Judge who came next is Mr. Justice Grantham, who has ordered 740 lashes. Only about seven or eight judges have ever ordered the lash, and Mr. Justice Day has ordered more than twice as many as all the other judges put together. It comes to this: that if a prisoner is tried the fact whether he is to be flogged depends not upon the gravity of his offence, not upon the amount of brutality he has used in order to carry out his evil intentions, but upon the mere chance of which judge happens to try him. If he is tried before Mr. Justice Day it is perfectly certain he will be flogged, because Mr. Justice Day thinks flogging the right form of punishment. But if he is tried before the Lord Chief Justice, or Mr. Justice Mathew, or Mr. Justice Wright, he is equally certain that he will never have a single stroke, because they have never ordered one. And if he had happened to be brought before Mr. Justice Hawkins also, he would never have got the lash, for that judge before he left the Bench, when asked why he never ordered a flogging, replied, "If you flog a man you make a perfect devil of him." Thus it is a pure matter of chance whether a man is flogged or not. You may pass this Bill, you may authorise judges to order flogging in all these cases, but even then it will depend upon the personal opinion of the judge whether or not he will do so. In order to make flogging deterrent you ought to go a step further, and say that in the event of a man being convicted of certain offences the judge shall be bound to order him to be flogged. You must, in fact, treat these offences on the same principle that you treat murder. In the event of conviction you must allow no option to inflict anything but the one penalty. And, as showing the danger of laying down a hard-and-fast rule, I would point out that in regard to some of these offences you are dealing with professional criminals,

* See debate in Committee on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, 31st July, 1885. (*The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. ccc., page 722.)

who deliberately plan a crime, while in others you have men who act upon the impulse of sudden passion. I see that under the Bill the attendance of the prison doctor and the governor of the prison is required during the time of flogging. What does that mean? It is an unnecessary clause, because the Home Office regulations provide for every safeguard of the kind. But by putting it in the Bill the promoters throw some light on what flogging means. It means that a man may be flogged practically within an inch of his life. I do not believe in this form of punishment, and I shall do all I can to prevent its adoption. In penal servitude there is a chance of reclaiming a man by treating him with kindness and humanity, but by flogging a man is reduced to the level of a brute. I beg to move the rejection of the Bill.

*MR. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I desire to raise my voice as far as I can in opposition to a measure which I believe is, in many respects, extremely retrograde and most distasteful to the public at large. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill based his support upon his experience in the administration of the law. I venture to suggest that I may claim to base my opposition upon experience in legal practice extending over thirty years. I should not like it to be supposed for one moment that I have any sympathy with the criminals who commit these crimes, although I totally differ from the right hon. Gentleman as to what should be the treatment meted out to them. I do not want it to go forth that this Bill is entirely supported by Members on this side of the House. I should like the public to know that we are at least divided upon it. It has too often happened in the past that hon. Members opposite have had to rectify the tendency sometimes exhibited on this side of the House to permit punishments of too great severity. I listened with surprise to the manner in which this Bill was introduced. I should have expected, seeing that it passed a Second Reading in 1889, the right hon. Gentleman would have given some reasons why no Government or no individual has since thought fit to reintroduce it.

MR. WHARTON: It has been reintroduced twice, if not three times since then, but fortunes of the ballot prevented our proceeding with it.

*MR. H. D. GREENE: I accept that statement; but even then, surely if opinion was so strongly in favour of it pressure from inside or outside this House might have induced the Government to give its attention to the subject. No statistics whatever have been quoted to justify the alteration of the law in the direction proposed by this Bill. I must say, too, that when I turn to the Bill itself I am startled to see there is absolutely no principle laid down in the classification of the offences to which this Bill is to apply. No explanation has been given why Scotland is excluded from its operation. The unfortunate Paddy in Dublin and the unfortunate wretch in Whitechapel may be whipped, but the man in Scotland is to go free? What is the reason? Because the Scotch will not tolerate a law of this kind. In an Act passed in 1862, to amend the law with regard to the whipping of juvenile offenders, a clause was introduced providing that no one should be whipped in Scotland for offences against person or property, and the Scotch have enjoyed a complete immunity from whipping ever since. Can anyone contend that there has been an increase of crime in Scotland because of that provision? I think my right hon. friend fairly deserves the criticism made by the hon. Member for West Carmarthenshire, that nothing has been adduced by him to justify the change which he proposes. The Bill introduces an entirely new principle in criminal law. In at least three instances the "opinion of the Court" is to be taken in substitution for what should be the finding of the jury. For instance, the question whether a prisoner is or is not to be whipped—according to the age limit—depends, not upon whether he is proved to be under the age of sixteen, but whether, in the opinion of the Court, he is under that age, and thus a boy who is under sixteen, and looks older, would run great risk of being whipped on the greater scale, while one who is over sixteen and looks younger would have a chance of escaping with the lesser punishment. The right hon. Gentleman has told us he is willing to accept Amendments. I say he ought not to have brought forward a Bill which is so full of errors and so unacceptable, and then ask the House to put it in proper form. Again, there appears in the Bill to be no principle underlying the different offences to be punished in this way. If you examine

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[illegible] would [illegible] this House. Anot[illegible] [illegible] why I object to the meas[illegible]

it is badly drawn, and if it is to
e than a consolidating Bill it ought
with a great many other offences.
blackmailing, arson, the offence of
eating or violent assault to be
l? I can see no reason why these
s are not included, and I have
one suggested. I think of all the
errible offences blackmailing is
y the worst. and that is left out
ner. I respectfully say that if
l is looked carefully into it will be
to be a measure which on that
alone should be rejected. But
all this I say that Bill is a retro-
neasure altogether. If we look a
ore closely into the history of cor-
unishment than my hon. friend the
r for West Carmarthenshire asked
hall see that the whole tendency of
nent since the present reign com-
has been to abolish the severest and
gate the lesser forms of punishment
nave been inflicted. If you want
what happened at the introduction
Majesty's reign, look at what she
en she closed the first session of
t Parliament in 1837. You will
he most touching allusion she
to her joy at the fact that
punishment for several kinds of
had been abolished, and from
ne forward we have been gradually
rid of barbarous sentences.
Her Majesty came to the Throne
y four occasions has the punish-
of whipping been applied by
House to any offences. The
ccasion was the Oxford Act,
in 1841 or 1842, to punish
whipping persons who struck
alarmed the Queen herself.
r five years afterwards another
s passed to enable persons to be
d who destroyed works of art
eums. In 1847 this punishment
plied to blackmailers; and in 1863
ne Bill which was to punish persons
crime of garroting. What was
lt of all this? Out of those four
es two were repealed in 1861,
he criminal law was consolidated.
Acts against blackmailing and the
tion of works of art in museums
ly been in force for twelve years,
hey were found not to be satis-
. The Criminal Law Commis-
in 1843 said they did not recom-
ne extension or continuance of the
nent of whipping, and in 1861,
when the great consolidation of the criminal law took place, numbers of those Acts which had been passed in earlier centuries and those which had been passed in Her Majesty's reign were also swept away, and there remain now only two Acts on the Statute Book, which have been passed in the reign of Her Majesty, in which flogging of adults may be administered, and those two are the cases of striking at or alarming Her Majesty, and the other one assaulting with intent to rob or choking, which were covered by the Act of 1863. Those punishments having been repealed, we heard but little more of the question until 1879 and 1880, when the policy of flogging in the Army as a punishment was stopped. In the year 1880 there was a General Election, and I can well recall that at that time several candidates who wished to sit on our side of the House were rejected on the ground of their defence of corporal punishment. I think that no less than three very distinguished persons I could name also met with very great hostility in consequence of their views on this subject. In 1881 it was completely done away with, and in 1882 the Home Secretary for the time being—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire—was asked on two occasions whether he would not extend flogging to cases of indecent assault, and he said most distinctly no, and he would not listen to it. When the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was brought forward in 1885 the Government on this side of the House did not venture to put in any clause whereby whipping should be administered to adults. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton did introduce an Amendment to apply it in the case of rape, but he did not suggest that it should be applied in minor offences upon women and children. No Government suggested any general extension of whipping after it was abolished in 1861. In 1889 this Bill got its Second Reading, and here we have it again unearthed and dug up by several of my hon. friends, with no better grounds to support it than have just been heard in the opening speech of the hon. Member. The statistics do not show that there is any necessity for this measure. A Return has recently come from Liverpool, where the Chief Constable has stated that there has been an enormous falling off in crimes of

violence, and I think I am right in saying that the diminution of the cost of administering justice there will amount to something like £6,000 a year. There is a divided opinion on this matter, and I contend that where there is such a division of opinion upon such a momentous question the opinion of those against should be accepted rather than those for. The present and two last Lord Chief Justices all pronounced against this punishment being extended to cases of indecent assault, and this view has been taken by the highest criminal judges in the land. I do not intend to say more upon this beyond pointing out that if you have judges who will flog and some who will not, the result will be that you will have some juries who will vote for flogging and some who will not. Where a court has this arbitrary power, and it is left to the jury to decide whether or not they will convict, there are numbers of jurymen who, taking strong views like my hon. friend who has moved this resolution, would give no verdict at all, or would even compromise their consciences rather than bring in a verdict of guilty. This is an irrevocable punishment, and so of course is capital punishment, but that is no reason for saying that you are to support a fresh irrevocable punishment. It is an indelible degradation, and for which no compensation is possible. We are told that one great advantage is that it is speedily carried out, and the right hon. Gentleman does not like to have any delay over the matter. Unless there is a great demand for such a punishment we certainly ought not lightly to allow it quickly to be imposed. What demand does the right hon. Gentleman suggest there is? A Return has been given showing that between 1894 and 1898 grand juries in different parts of the country made representations in favour of the power to whip. You will find they are thirteen in number. But do they come from all over the country? They do not. I am speaking from recollection, but I think three of them come from Durham, and in another county they have come twice, and in a third county twice. But still, if frequent, these representations only come from a few places. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has taken any part in making these representations to the learned judge, or whether they come from any person of distinction there who may have, from the pulpit or elsewhere, advocated such a course, but these representations come three times from Durham. I think if there was a genuine demand for this measure we should have had it represented by the judges in their general council, by grand juries in numerous places, by magistrates' meetings, societies, and charitable individuals, but we have had no such demand. We have had a demand by three chairmen of quarter sessions who are associated with this Bill, and I do suggest that it is a very unfortunate thing to base legislation on no better demand for it than has been suggested. I have a deep personal conviction that this Bill would be contrary to the policy which seems to actuate us in all other matters of legislation. We have during this reign protected animals from cruelty, and we have protected children from cruelty. We have been more merciful in the treatment meted out to our prisoners, and I cannot speak too highly of the readiness with which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has met the appeals made to him for legislation in this direction. I shall listen with very great interest to what the right hon. Gentleman has to say now as to the success of the partial abolition of flogging in prisons in 1898. Last year no less than five times the Home Secretary prevented prisoners undergoing sentences of flogging passed upon them judicially; and I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is likely to allow this kind of thing to take place too freely, judging from the way he has acted in revising sentences. I feel that it would be a terrible blot upon our legislative escutcheon if, at the close of the century, and almost at the close of Her Majesty's reign, we should pass this kind of retrograde legislation. Let us wait for a few more years until a stronger case for such a measure is presented to the House. Such a Bill as this inevitably tends to a very great deal of hostility, and I hope it will be a long time before this House gives a Second Reading to such a measure. I most cordially second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Lloyd Morgan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. H. D. Greene.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): What has struck me on this occasion has been the interest shown by the legal profession in the maintenance of the criminal classes. They seem to consider them in the same light as an over-zealous gamekeeper who wishes to keep up a large stock of game for future sport; that is the underlying tenderness towards the interesting criminal disclosed in the speeches of my legal friends. That is a point of view with which the mere layman is rather out of sympathy. Anything affecting the comfort or the feelings of the criminal is a matter of extraordinary importance to these legal Members. It does not seem to occur to them to approach the matter from the point of view of consideration for those who suffer from the action of the criminals. Members who take that view are anxious to do something to make certain classes of crime less frequent, but I have listened in vain to lawyer after lawyer for any sympathy whatever with the aggrieved class of the community. It is the criminal who is to be treated with the utmost leniency, and the greatest care must be taken not to oppose the measure lest it should prevent his possible recall from criminality into the paths of virtue he has temporarily strayed from. Probably few Members of this House have seen or had anything to do with the infliction of the terrible punishment of flogging, unless they have done so in the capacity of a military officer or as a prison visitor. Those who have seen it as I have look back with horror at the recollection, and no one could approach the question in a more serious spirit than we do. Nevertheless, feeling that so strongly, I still assert that there are cases in which that punishment is not only justifiable, but even wise and proper in the interests of the community generally. I consider that my testimony is worth more than that of a mere outsider. I speak with no desire to undervalue or understate what the punishment means to those who suffer it. I deprecate entirely any assertion that those who support flogging think lightly of it, or in a foolish sense desire lightly to reimpose it. Those of us who are not lawyers recognise that there are certain crimes to which it ought to be applied, because as far as we know it is the only punishment likely to act as a deterrent of those particular crimes. I deprecate any attempt to argue from the abolition of flogging in the Army that flogging is not a deterrent. The whole conditions in the Army, the treatment of the men, and the current of public opinion, combined to bring about the abolition of flogging. The Member for Shrewsbury spoke in what, I think, was rather a whole-cheeked fashion of the value of the opinion of chairmen of quarter sessions. Taking one man with another, on most matters of ordinary common sense, I should prefer the opinion of a Chairman of Quarter Sessions to the opinion of a lawyer of equivalent rank. In the same way a soldier would prefer the opinion of a soldier to that of a naval man of equal rank. It has been too much left out of sight that Chairmen of Quarter Sessions have been very decided in their opinions on this subject, and have made presentations upon it, and otherwise exhibited their sympathy with this Bill in every way in their power. And they represent, infinitely better than the itinerant lawyer travelling from place to place in the exercise of his avocation, the real opinion of the localities they are dealing with, and have a far better knowledge of the social conditions of the neighbourhoods. They understand how far the class of crime most prevalent in their districts can be repressed by a particular punishment. I respect the evident earnestness of the hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of this Bill, and I sympathise with the view that we ought to be assured that this punishment will only be inflicted for the purpose of correcting an abuse so great that it cannot be dealt with in any other way. The evidence which I have seems to me to show that there are certain crimes to which this punishment ought to be applied, and could be applied with better effect than any other punishment we could devise. It is argued that, taking the country generally, there is a decrease of these crimes. While a general statement of that kind may be true, there may be localities where these crimes are on the increase, and if there are localities where we could put our foot on a most accursed crime, the House ought to hesitate before it refuses to grant the application of a punishment for the purpose of stamping it out. I noticed a letter in this morning's *Times*, signed "Your Law Reporter," which bears very directly on this issue. I find

that these outrages are very serious in their number in the Midland counties, I regret to say, and Staffordshire has an unenviable notoriety in this respect. The calendar for December, 1898, contained the names of thirty-nine prisoners, and of these no fewer than seventeen were charged with offences against women and children. We have heard some very disparaging remarks with regard to certain judges from quarters from which they ought not to have proceeded.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN: I protest——

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: I was not referring to the hon. Member.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): You ought to specify; you are making a very serious charge.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: I decline to accept any ruling as to procedure from the hon. Member. I am sorry that certain reflections have been made on the judges. We ought to accept their opinions as valuable on this question at any rate, and therefore in corroboration of what I have said I will quote the views of one judge. In his charge to the grand jury at Stafford in 1898, Mr. Justice Ridley, after remarking that he had visited several counties in which he found that crimes against women and children were more numerous than any other class of crime, said flogging was a brutal and degrading punishment, and ought to be reserved solely for those who were brutal and degraded. Now, let there be no mistake as to this. I and others who support this Bill only wish this punishment to fall on those who are of brutal and degraded type, and who commit these brutal and degrading crimes. Put in what safeguards you will, but bear in mind that the crime to which we wish to apply this punishment is one which means the destruction of the life and honour of some poor woman or some poor child. My hon. and learned friend expressed a conviction that this punishment should not be inflicted in the case of a first offence, but I say that if the offence is one against the virtue of a woman or child, the offender should not be allowed to escape the lash. I object to this mealy-mouthedness, this desire to shield the criminal at the expense of the community and of the innocent sufferer. The general point I wish to urge is that these crimes prevail, and are increasing in certain localities.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN: Does the hon. and gallant Member mean that there is an increase at a particular time, or an increase spread over a number of years? I admit that in some places there is an increase at a particular time, but you must spread it over a number of years.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: I am not anxious to dispute minor points; I only want to secure adhesion to the principle that, if there is an increase of a particular kind of crime which cannot be repressed by the action of the ordinary law, then it is not unreasonable on our part to seek to impose a punishment which we believe would check it. You must treat it as an epidemic; you must act on the same principle as we do when there is an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in this country; when such an epidemic prevails we insist on the wholesale destruction of suspected animals, and when the country is free from the disease we do nothing of the kind. In the same way with this particular class of crime. If our ordinary punishments have not the effect of stopping it, then it is only reasonable to look for some form of punishment which will have that effect. We do not advocate flogging because we like that form of punishment, but we do take exception to the statement that flogging is not a deterrent. What are men but grown-up boys, and does not boyhood's experience teach us that it was the chance of getting a flogging which prevented us committing many peccadilloes? I repeat that sufficient weight is not given in this House to the opinions of our grand juries. There could be no body of men more anxious to improve the social condition of the districts in which they live; they are in touch with the feelings of all classes; they know the horror and insecurity of feeling which the prevalence of such crimes causes in the minds of the working classes; they are aware of the desire to have these criminals more firmly dealt with, and when they make their presentments it is not right that hon. Members should pooh-pooh them. I hope that this Bill will be read a second time. We honestly believe there is an immediate need for legislation such as

this. Crimes like these are apt to increase when men feel that the punishment to be risked is not so severe as to make the risk not worth running. It is dangerous to allow such a feeling to grow, and I believe that the passing of this Bill would produce a rapid diminution of a crime which at the present moment constitutes the biggest stain on our national character. Sentimentalism is misplaced in these matters, and we must do our best to stamp out an admitted evil by the assertion of that which is right.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I regard the Bill as unnecessary and retrograde. I came down to the House with an open mind on the subject. I have heard the debate, and my mind has closed with a snap against the proposal, for the paucity of the arguments which have been advanced proves conclusively that no case whatever can be made out for this addition to the law. The evolution of civilisation should carry on onwards and upwards, but this is an attempt to put back the clock. The speech of the mover was apologetic; he offered to change anything in the Bill we may not like, and I am bound to say that the arguments of the hon. Member for West Carmarthen quite knocked the bottom out of the case for the Bill. It has been my misfortune to witness many floggings when that form of punishment prevailed in the Army, and I am convinced that if hon. Members could be taken to a barracks square to witness one administration of this punishment we should hear nothing further of flogging in the Army or elsewhere. And while I am opposed to public floggings I am still more opposed to private ones. What could be more terrible than for a man to be led out on a cold winter morning to be hanged or flogged in the presence of the warders and gaoler, with no one even to whom he can display his bravado? The Bill requires that a doctor shall be present at the flogging. I remember witnessing one flogging. The criminal was duly tied up and then there came the dreadful swish of the lash, the noise of which was partially drowned by the muffled roll of the drums, a device to prevent the possible screams of the unfortunate victim being heard. But I am bound to say I never heard a single sound proceed from the man's lips. Terrible as was the punishment for him, I think it was still more terrible for me on whom rested the responsibility of watching it. After twenty-five lashes had been administered the man's wrists were untied, and I had to decide whether any permanent damage would be done to his constitution if the flogging were continued. How could I or any medical man say at such a time what would be the ultimate effect of the shock to the system? I say it was an invidious and detestable duty to impose on any man, and it is in order to save my medical brethren from having it placed upon them by this Bill that I oppose the further progress of this measure. And it should be borne in mind that this Bill applies to a class of case in which not infrequently hysterical women bring an atrocious charge against a medical man and subsequently withdraw it. We had a case only the other day. Suppose the doctor implicated in it had been condemned and had received twenty-five lashes, he would have been ruined morally and physically, and only too late would it have been discovered that the charge was a trumped up one.

MR. WHARTON: That sort of case is especially excluded from this Bill. Two men must be associated in the crime before a flogging is inflicted.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I do not see how that provision lessens the danger. In conclusion, let me say how much I appreciate the remarks of my hon. friend the Member for Shrewsbury, as to the class of tribunal to which these cases would be referred. I am a professional man; if I want to get legal opinion I go to a lawyer, and if I want medical opinion I go to a doctor. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite appears to think that the opinion of country gentlemen and clergymen is better than that of a trained lawyer, but if I wanted my leg cut off I would not go to the hon. and gallant Gentleman; I would go to a trained doctor in Brook Street. If it is so easy to obtain the administration of the law gratuitously, why is it necessary to spend a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds on the judiciary? I want a man trained in his profession. In Scotland we have a better course of procedure. We have no amateur gentleman aping the airs and graces of lawyers; we have no clergymen on the bench, the most pitiless of all people to deal with questions having any

practical bearing on Christian charity. In a paper edited by an hon. Member of this House there are pilloried week by week the proceedings of the great unpaid. You have country gentlemen steeped in all the prejudices of their class, sitting on the bench and aping knowledge of a profession in which they have not been trained. In Scotland we have none of that. I have been a J.P. for more than twenty years, and I never have been called upon to act except to vote for the renewal of a licence, and that I daresay I did badly. So convinced am I that I would do the work badly, that as a justice of the peace I have confined myself to witnessing occasionally a signature. County gentlemen have their own avocations, but let us have trained lawyers to administer the law. This Bill would put into the hands of untrained people the administration of a new departure in our law which is dangerous and repressive, and which I hope the House will reject.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): It certainly seems to me a very unusual thing that a Bill seeking to effect an organic change in the criminal law should be brought in in the first place by a private Member, and in the next place should affect Ireland, although there is not a single Irish name on the back of the Bill. The Bill carefully excludes Scotland from its operation but includes Ireland, and on a Wednesday afternoon, without knowing what the views of the Government are on this measure, the House is called on to enact a Bill involving a most serious change in our criminal law. I was somewhat surprised to hear the eloquent and gallant Member who spoke last but one pay such a compliment to the legal members of the House as to tell them that they were the champions of the criminal classes, and that no attention should be paid to their arguments. He went further, and described them as the gamekeepers of the criminal classes. As a member of that rather maligned profession, I repudiate altogether, on behalf of many eminent and learned Members of this House, any such imputation. I believe if you want a man who can enlighten the House, not only as regards legislation, but also as regards morality, you must look for him among the legal members of the House. I assume, however, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke in that rhetorical heat which is sometimes aroused in advocating a bad cause. The hon. and gallant Gentleman is a Conservative, and from the style and tenour of his observations, I imagine he is a Conservative of the old-fashioned school, which has always contributed much, I will not say to the amusement, but to the liveliness of this House, and which many years ago, before most hon. Gentlemen now present were born, was the subject of Daniel O'Connell's famous epigram, which I will not now repeat, about the three gallant colonels of that day. Now as to the Bill—in Ireland happily and certainly there is no occasion for any change in the law. I can speak with some experience in the matter, because I was for many years connected in more capacities than one with the administration of the criminal law in the country. In my earlier days I frequently defended prisoners, for many years it was my duty to prosecute prisoners, and for some years also I exercised the responsible functions of Chairman of Quarter Sessions in one of the largest counties in Ireland, so that the administration of the criminal law came constantly under my observation, and I can assure the House, that, in my opinion at least, and I think also in the opinion of every Irish Member, there is no occasion for any change in the existing law so far as Ireland is concerned. Certainly if this Bill passes Second Reading, which I trust it will not, one of the first acts of the Irish Members in Committee will be to endeavour to expunge Ireland from its operations. In its general tenour and effect the Bill is of a most reactionary, old-fashioned, eighteenth century character. It is literally a rolling back of the tide of public opinion, which has been flowing in the direction of justice and the protection of public rights since the famous days of Romilly and Brougham. We are now asked to return to the time when corporal punishment was inflicted at the discretion of justices; we are asked to go back almost to the days of the pillory and the stocks, when the character of the English people was more or less disgraced by the way in which country justices administered justice. Under the second sub-section, courts of summary jurisdiction can exercise the opinion as to whether a male prisoner is over sixteen years of age —there is no test, merely the *sic volo* of the bench—and then if he is convicted of

an offence punishable by penal servitude or hard labour he can be sentenced to the last. I do not think hon. Gentlemen quite appreciate the extent of this sub-section. Under the Hard Labour Act almost every single offence is punishable by hard labour, and consequently every offence, with one or two exceptions, comes within the operation of this sub-section. The court may not even be a court of Quarter Sessions, it may be a court of Petty Sessions, and you give that court in any remote part of England in bucolic or colliery districts this power. For goodness' sake do not involve poor Ireland in the contumely of being subjected to such a code as this. It is not confined to the particular class of crime to which allusion has been made. The law is sufficient to reach that crime as far as ever it can be reached by law. We are not living in a Utopian state where crime of that character will not occur, but the statistics read by the hon. and learned Member in his most able speech will satisfy every hon. Member that that crime is on the decrease, and that there is no necessity now for altering the law in regard to it. But that is not all. The Bill also provides that when any male person over the age of sixteen is convicted at assizes the court may direct that such person be once, twice, or thrice privately whipped with an instrument specified in the schedule, including, I suppose, a cat-of-nine-tails, by which under a sentence of twelve strokes nine times twelve are given. The crimes included in that sub-section include almost every possible crime a man may be guilty of. In the first schedule almost every crime short of murder is enumerated. What are the grounds laid before the House for any such change? Have we any statistics which would show that any particular reason exists why this Bill should be passed, as seemed to be the case when the Garroting Act was passed? At that time garroting was traced to a number of persons who had returned from transportation, and it was shown that this frightful crime was not a crime affecting the criminal classes in London generally, but had emanated from persons whom penal servitude had made utterly reckless and had completely demoralised. That crime was not put down by the Garroting Act, because, as a matter of history, the garroters were convicted and sentenced by Baron Bramwell before the Act became law. It was the existence of the crime that suggested legislation, but the legislation was too late to apply in those cases, and the crime has not been repeated since except in solitary and desultory instances. Since that time no attempt has been made to apply generally this degrading corporal punishment, and I say, that nothing but the clearest demonstration that there was a prevalence throughout the kingdom of crime of the particular class said to be aimed at would justify the House in passing such legislation. Flogging degrades the person who inflicts the punishment, degrades and demoralises the victim of the punishment, it outrages all our sense of humanity, and it leaves hopeless any expectation that the victim would ever under any circumstances or under the most favourable auspices become a respectable and worthy member of society. I think that the statistics which have been quoted demonstrate that it would not operate as a deterrent of crime, and that it would be a blot and stain on the history of English jurisprudence. If any change is necessary, I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman who now presides at the Home Office would be the first to initiate it, and I hope he will now declare that as far as it has come to his knowledge there is no pressing or urgent necessity for a Bill of this sort, and that the House should not be asked at the instance of a private Member to pass such a stringent and degrading measure.

*CAPTAIN PHILLPOTTS (Devonshire, Torquay): Hon. Members who oppose this Bill have referred at some length to the question of flogging in the Army, though the Bill we are now discussing has nothing whatever to do with that question, and I am quite certain that if it were proposed in this or any other Bill to revive flogging in the Army or the Navy as it existed thirty or forty years ago, every single Member on this side of the House would vote against it. What is proposed is punishment by flogging in certain cases of brutal crimes—crimes which show that the perpetrators of them must be of the most brutal and degraded nature. Have hon. Gentlemen no pity for the unfortunate women and children who are sometimes subjected to most frightful outrages, which not only inflict pain, but in many cases shatter for

ever their nervous system? Have hon. Gentlemen who oppose the Bill no pity for these victims? Do they expend all their sympathy on the brutal scoundrels who commit these outrages? I think they ought to consider the victims as well as the perpetrators. This Bill only extends the law in a modified degree to those who are proved guilty of the most horrible crimes. In fact, in other cases it is proposed to substitute a milder form of punishment than exists under the present law. By Section 2 it is proposed to extend the age at which boys may be flogged for certain serious offences. I am quite sure that many magistrates and judges often feel the keenest regret in being compelled to sentence boys under sixteen to terms of imprisonment, whereas if they had the power to inflict sharp pain, which leaves no permanent disgrace and inflicts no physical injury, the boys might be permanently benefited, instead of having to go out into the world after a term of imprisonment branded with the stigma of a gaol bird. Many hon. Gentlemen have suffered corporal punishment themselves. One of the hon. Members who put down an Amendment for the rejection of the Bill was brought up in the well-known school that bears as its proud motto, "Manners maketh man." Was he never subjected to corporal punishment during his time at that school? If not, he must have been singularly fortunate. I believe that birching for boys is a most efficacious and in the truest sense of the word a merciful punishment. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite complained that the Bill applied to Ireland. I listened attentively to the speech of my right hon. friend who introduced this Bill, and I find the principal item relating to Ireland is the abolition of flogging for offences in connection with the mutilation of animals, and also for offences in which persons are prevented from following their lawful avocations, or, in other words, the crime of boycotting. I can only say that I would be sorry that flogging should be inflicted for that offence, and I think most of my hon. friends are of the same opinion. I have always been of opinion that the punishment for any offence should, as far as possible, be adapted to that offence. For instance, where an offence has been committed possibly in the heat of the moment and possibly under stress of severe temptation, the punishment meted out should be different from that given for a similar offence committed deliberately and with malice aforethought, and for brutal offences which not only inflict temporary suffering on those on whom they are committed, but may, and often do, affect the victims for the whole of their after lives I contend that the punishment should be such as would be likely to act as a deterrent. This Bill abolishes the punishment of flogging for offences to which that punishment is utterly unsuited, and permits flogging for brutal crimes, and I intend to give it my cordial support.

*Mr. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): This is a Bill which, whatever may be its merits as a measure of consolidation and repeal, has for its primary purpose the extension of the punishment of flogging. It provides for that extension in two distinct ways—in the first place, by making flogging a possible part of the sentence in cases of crime in respect of which it has never hitherto been administered; and in the next place it entrusts the power of ordering it to a tribunal to which that power has to all intents and purposes hitherto been denied. That being the character and governing object of the measure, I do not hesitate—although I may be called sentimental by the hon. and gallant Member who has just sat down—to avow that, as far as I am concerned, I am unalterably opposed to it. I acknowledge the long experience and great ability in administering the criminal law of the right hon. Member who introduced the Bill; but when it is remembered that since the subject, I will not say was first mooted, but first became a matter of Parliamentary inquiry, nearly twenty years ago, there have been six Home Secretaries, belonging to different parties, and that not one of them has ever taken upon himself the responsibility of making a proposal of the kind to Parliament, the House must feel that this is a path upon which we should enter with a great deal of deliberation. Speaking for myself and my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth, who is unfortunately prevented from being present this afternoon, and who entirely shares my views, I can give the House a very good and sufficient reason why it never occurred to us for a moment to propose such legislation. It is only neces-

sary to observe the judicial statistics as a whole; to trace the connection between severity of punishment and the diminution of crime; to observe that while some judges resort to flogging, a very considerable proportion, I believe the majority of the English Bench at present, comprising some of the ablest and most experienced of our judges, have never in their lives awarded the sentence of the lash—it is only necessary to take into account these considerations to perceive that no *primâ facie* case even has been made out for this extension of the law. The question can be looked at from three points of view—punishment pure and simple, reformation, and deterrent effect. Let us apply these three tests to this particular case. As to the first, I regard the suggestions made in this debate as a revival of the theory, at once fallacious and barbarous, that a man who commits a peculiarly brutal offence should receive a proportionately brutal punishment. I can imagine nothing more repugnant to the most elementary principles of justice and common sense than to say that because a man in a fit of passion has committed a savage offence, those whose duty it is to enforce respect for the law should begin that man's punishment with correspondingly savage treatment. As to reformation, has anyone ever yet been reformed by the punishment of the lash? I have never been able to discover any such evidence. The persons who commit the offences in the schedule of the Bill are for the most part brutal and degraded. But is the wisest course for weaning them from brutality and redeeming them from brutality to commence the course of punishment by treatment which involves moral humiliation and physical torture? You may depend on it with most of them there are latent, but still present, sparks of self-respect, and a sense of human dignity which, if carefully watched and tended, might in the course of time burn into a purifying glow, but which would be in great danger of extinction by such measures as the Bill proposes. As to the deterrent effect of flogging, it is impossible to look upon a punishment as really deterrent if the question whether it will be inflicted in any particular case is no more a certainty than a chance in a lottery. The majority of the judges never award this punishment at all, and if flogging is fixed to some crime to which it is not now attached we shall have the same uncertainty as we have at present. That in itself is sufficient to do away with the argument of deterrence. The crimes for which flogging might be awarded under the Bill are for the most part crimes which are committed under the influence of drink or passion or both. That is substantially true of at least three-fourths of the crimes of violence against women and children, whom we all agree should have every possible protection. If you admit that, and I think no one will deny it, you must admit also that the persons who are likely to be deterred by fear of punishment at the moment they are about to commit a crime, and when the temptation to commit it is irresistible, are not capable of forecasting and discriminating as to the kind of punishment which they were incurring. To say that persons under such influences calculate in their own minds whether the crime to which they are tempted is liable to punishment by penal servitude or imprisonment or flogging, is to fly in the face of the ordinary facts of human nature. As to garroting, that crime had been brought to an end as a serious danger before the House of Commons in a fit of panic, due to one of its own Members having been garroted, resorted to legislation. Garroting was put down by Baron Bramwell largely without resort to flogging, by a fearless, but, I agree, a severe administration of the existing criminal law. If these considerations are well founded, I hope that Her Majesty's Government will resist this attempt to alter our criminal law in a sense which involves a retrogression to an obsolete theory of punishment, and which is calculated not only to create greater uncertainty but also to introduce additional confusion and inconvenience in the administration of justice.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have paid great attention to this debate and to the speech of my right hon. friend who has done so much good work in his own county in the administration of the criminal law. It seems to me that this question may be viewed from two different points of view, leading to contrary conclusions. I am not unmindful of the fact that a predecessor of mine, speaking on this same Bill eleven years ago, took the

view that it was a consolidation of the law, and that although he objected to many of its provisions, he thought it was desirable on the whole to give it a Second Reading, and the House did so. On that occasion my own name was on the back of the Bill, and at that time I shared the view of my right hon. friend the Member for Ripon. It certainly seems a strange thing that while flogging can be ordered for robbery with violence, it cannot be ordered for far graver offences against the persons of women and children. I am sure many hon. Members will feel that with reference to the protection which the law ought to give against assaults on the person. Therefore, I do not think it is necessary to defend myself for having felt that there ought to be a strengthening of the law in that direction. As far as the Bill is a repealing Bill, there will be very little difference of opinion about it. It proposes to repeal Acts of Parliament which are practically obsolete. Again, from the point of view that this is a measure to bring into one Act of Parliament all the offences punishable by whipping and flogging, there is an argument in its favour. But the main object of the Bill is to increase the power of flogging, especially for offences against the honour of women and children, coupled with personal violence. I am bound to say from the point of view which I take I cannot support the Bill of my right hon. friend. I am sure that every hon. Member in this House feels that this offence ought to be put down with a strong hand, and I do not say what I have said out of sympathy with the men who commit these offences; but I have seen something of the administration of the criminal law from another point of view since I entered the office which I now hold; and I do not hesitate to say that in my belief it is not a desirable change to make in the law. One word as to juvenile offenders. I believe very much in what fell from my hon. and gallant friend about the punishment of juvenile offenders by birching. In fact, I am responsible for a Bill containing provisions intended to prevent juvenile offenders being sent to prison at all, by widening the present powers of summary courts to administer the birch to them. In the Government Bill, which I hope will soon reach this House, the punishment of birching will be made available in all cases except homicide as a substitution for the imprisonment of children and young persons; and I hope that when the Bill comes before us the House will give it an impartial consideration. I now come to the particular punishment of flogging adults for offences against women and children. The first argument against it is, of course, that which was so ably dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me—what is the object of punishment, and whether this particular punishment is deterrent or reformative. Upon the question of the influence of this particular punishment I have made the best inquiry I could from those who are connected with our gaols, and I am bound to say I find opinions differ very considerably. There are those who are disposed to think that it had succeeded with a certain number of offenders, and others took the contrary view. It is impossible to deny that, in some cases, a flogging may have prevented a man from committing a brutal offence a second time; but at the same time the many inquiries made on the subject, and investigations into the figures, have proved that there are several cases of men who, having been flogged under the Act of 1863, had afterwards again committed the same offence. It therefore does not appear to me, from an impartial investigation of the figures, to be possible to generalise safely, or to form any definite conclusion on the subject. So again, with reference to the deterrent effect of the punishment on others, it will be admitted that if there is an epidemic of any particular crime, a kind of punishment may be justified which otherwise we might not be disposed to inflict. If there was a grave epidemic of serious offences, which apparently could only be dealt with in one way, Parliament and the country, no doubt, would be prepared, even though that way were repugnant to the ordinary civil and criminal practice of the country, to undertake the necessary means for extinguishing these offences. But there is no proof of the existence of such a state of affairs at the present moment. Allusion has been made to the Garroting Act. I agree with the version of the history of that Act, at all events as far as London is concerned, given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and that the rapid and severe action which put down garroting in London took place before the passing of the Act of 1863. But I am not sure that there is not evi-

Sir M. White Ridley.

dence in regard to Liverpool that a great deal of good was effected in the streets by that measure. I am sure, however, that it was not the case in Manchester. I do not think it is proved that the passing of the Garroting Act has had a definitely deterrent effect. Now, that being the case, there is reason to doubt whether, when we are dealing with another offence of a complex character, it is desirable to apply this particular kind of punishment. I believe it is true that this kind of crime is not on the increase. I have figures with me which show that during the last seven or eight years, lamentable as is the number of cases of crimes of violence and rape in which persons have been convicted from 1893 up to the present time, it is not the fact that these crimes are largely on the increase, or that there is any special reason to believe that the present means of punishment are not adequate. That being the case, I doubt very considerably whether it is desirable to inflict this punishment, or to give the judges power to inflict it. Moreover there is, I think, an unanswerable objection to the Bill, which has been already dwelt upon by others who have spoken before me. I think that any punishment is most undesirable, both from the point of view of the criminal and from that of the Court, which is so absolutely uncertain in its operation as flogging is known to be. Quotations have already been made from the Return presented to the House, showing the number of sentences of this kind which have been inflicted during the last few years. No fair-minded man can look at that Return without seeing that a very large proportion of Her Majesty's judges are not willing to use this kind of punishment. I do not for a moment attempt to judge whether they are right or wrong, but there are only about four of Her Majesty's judges, including the late Recorder of the City of London, who have to any considerable extent made a free use of this kind of punishment. I do not in the least degree blame them for doing so; and I know that in the Central Criminal Court it is only used in cases of extreme violence; but still, the fact remains, that a very large proportion of Her Majesty's judges will not use their power to inflict this kind of punishment. I say, therefore, that with so much uncertainty surrounding the subject, it cannot be said that this particular kind of punishment is really effective and deterrent. I should like to add that in this kind of case especially you have the greatest difficulty in getting at the truth. Many Gentlemen in the House know that in this kind of case it is more difficult to get at the truth than in any other. That being so, although not so strong an argument as that which I last used, it is very undesirable to inflict an irrevocable punishment. I have had cases before me since I have occupied my present position where the sentence of flogging was imposed, and in which it has been extremely difficult to decide whether the crime itself had been committed. In any of those cases where I had to come to the decision that the sentence ought never to have been inflicted, it would have been a very painful reflection to me if the flogging had been already inflicted. I desire also to mention here that I think that the present law, which enables a repetition of the flogging to be awarded, is a bad law. It is not for me to question in this place the discretion of Her Majesty's judges, but it has devolved upon me, in the discharge of my duty in the office I hold, to alter some of their sentences, and I hope I have not exceeded my duty in doing what I have done. I have been moved by the belief that even if you are to keep up the punishment of flogging for certain kinds of crime, it is not desirable, from the point of view of reformation, or from any point of view whatever, to inflict the sentence of flogging on a prisoner when he goes to prison, and then to hang over his head a second, or even a third, flogging. Recent legislation, to which allusion has been made, seeks to give an opportunity of reformation to prisoners, whether in penal servitude or when undergoing a sentence of imprisonment in local prisons. A great many good agencies in the country are seeking to help in that movement, and I think the Government cannot be accused of backwardness in their attempts to help it. At all events, rightly or wrongly, we are proceeding on the lines that no prisoner is to be regarded as absolutely irreclaimable, and therefore, speaking with all due deference to those who think otherwise, it appears to me that in cases of very serious crimes of this nature a long and heavy sentence, with some chance of reformation for the criminal while he is in prison, is a better thing than a short sentence of imprisonment if

it is to be accompanied by a flogging repeated once or twice. You are more likely to send that man out to society reformed than if you gave him a sentence of three months imprisonment and a flogging just before he came out. I do not like to make any promises, but if there is any change in the law which is desirable, it is a change in the direction of abolishing the second flogging. Perhaps I need hardly say anything more, but certainly I do not think that this is a Bill which ought to be read a second time by the House. For my own part, seeing the enormous difficulties which would attend its administration, the great inequality in its operation, and the grave doubt as to whether flogging is deterrent or reformative, I shall vote against the Bill.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I confess that I came down to the House to-day anxious to support the measure brought forward by my right hon. friend. The truth is that this Bill may honestly and fairly be taken in two ways. It has a certain sentimental aspect, and a legal aspect. I confess I came down to the House viewing it in its sentimental aspect. Many Members of this House, I believe, never read of a case of a brutal assault on women and children, but they are anxious to inflict punishment on these brutes with their own hands. We are all anxious, I believe, that these scoundrels should be made to feel something of the misery they have inflicted upon helpless women and children. But when we come to the legal aspect of the case I honestly confess that the speech of the right hon. Member for West Fifeshire carried with it a good deal of conviction. The right hon. Gentleman, I am bound to say, adduced several good and sufficient reasons why the punishment of flogging should not be inflicted, and with these I agree, but with others which he stated I cannot agree at the present moment. The question whether flogging is a deterrent or not is a difficult one; but the argument that when you have once flogged a man it is irrevocable, might be equally applied to capital punishment, and does not bring much conviction to my mind. With the opinion of the judges and six Home Secretaries against the deterrent effect of flogging, I confess that the weight of the argument is against my right hon. friend who introduced the Bill, and I hope he will withdraw it.

MR. DILLON: It has been to the credit and honour of the Irish party that for twenty years we have done everything in our power, and not unsuccessfully, to abolish flogging in every department of the public service. It was owing to the exertions of the Irish party that that disgrace to the British Army and Navy was done away with. I have not heard one single argument adduced to-day in favour of this Bill which we did not listen to in the House of Commons twenty-three years ago, when we raised the question of the abolition of flogging in the Army and Navy, and when officer after officer stood up and declared that it would be impossible to maintain discipline if the lash were taken out of their hands. Yet within two or three years after this abominable punishment was abolished, I do not think one single officer in the English Army would have had the audacity to propose its re-introduction. It is well known that when the lash was laid aside in Irish prisons, partly owing to a difference in the law, and partly to the voluntary action of the prison governors, the result was such that I venture to say no prison governor would accept it again if it were offered to him. Some hon. Members have gone so far as to covertly insinuate that those of us who oppose the lash do so out of sympathy for the barbarous and disgusting crimes which the Bill proposes to punish with the lash. That is a most unjust insinuation. There is in this House no difference of opinion, and I venture to say no difference in the degree of horror, with which these offences are regarded. The question of the lash is one altogether of principle, of experience, and also really of science. What has been the universal tendency of modern experience and modern civilisation? What has been the teaching of all men in all civilised countries who have applied their minds to this great subject of the reformation of criminals? It is that you do not gain good results, whether you look towards the reformation of the individual criminal, or towards the deterrents and prevention, by increasing the brutal or savage nature or the physical pain of your punishments. The whole teaching of modern experience in Europe has been that in direct proportion as the punish-

ments are mitigated in their savagery and brutality, so in that proportion has the savagery of the crimes decreased. The hon. and gallant Member for Epping says that when we read of accounts in the newspapers of these disgusting crimes on women and children we feel an intense desire to inflict with our own hands punishment on the criminal. [Colonel LOCKWOOD: Hear, hear !] Yes, the hon. and gallant Member said he does; and that is human nature. I do not find fault with that. It is the desire of all of us; and if we were on the spot who would blame us? But has the hon. and gallant Member ever applied to his mind the result of giving way to that passion of the moment? Has he read the recent accounts of lynching parties in America? Has he read descriptions of negroes taken in the Southern States of America by mobs who are inflamed by this desire of revenge?

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: The hon. Member will excuse me; that was without trial.

MR. DILLON: I understood the hon. and gallant Member to say that if he could get hold of a criminal who had committed one of these disgusting offences he would not wait for a trial. The natural man no doubt desires to inflict speedy and immediate punishment upon the criminal on the spot. That is what the mobs in America do. See what the giving way to such natural inclinations leads men to do. A crime is committed in the Southern States of America of this disgusting character, and the population call a *posse* to catch the criminal, and, having caught him, in numerous instances roast him alive slowly before a fire, or stick all over him splinters of inflammable wood, set them on fire, and watch him being burned to death. That is very horrible; but few Members of this House would get up and say that that is not precisely the logical conclusion to which we are driven if we allow ourselves to be carried away by such sentiments and natural inclinations of passion. I have maintained, and always will maintain, that the use of the lash and every form of physical punishment is a disgrace to this country, and is a survival of old barbarism. One hon. Member said that these criminals are brutes, and that you can only prevent them committing these atrocious crimes by inflicting physical suffering. Yes, that was said in "the spacious times of great Elizabeth"; and when Lord Burleigh's cook attempted to poison him he put that cook in a pot of hot water and boiled him slowly to death. That was considered the right thing to do in those days, when men were also put on the rack or tortured with the thumbscrew or the boot. Why not frankly and honestly propose the use of the rack, the thumbscrew, and the boot now? What is the difference between the rack, the thumbscrew and the boot, and the lash? [AN HON MEMBER: There is a great difference.] Not at all; you have not considered the operation of the rack. I maintain that the rack is a much more decent punishment, and much less disgusting than the lash. You need not stretch a man on the rack beyond a certain extent. Even in those old days a large number of people who had been stretched on the rack were able afterwards to get about and attend to their business. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh !] I am telling the simple truth. Of course, when hon. Members laugh it shows what they know of these matters. If you over-rack a man you can permanently injure him, but you can kill a man with the lash. Indeed, in this Bill you propose to have a surgeon standing behind who is to see that the man is not killed or permanently injured. I say there is no real distinction in principle between the rack, thumbscrew and boot, and the lash, They are all based on the same principle, namely, that in dealing with crime you are dealing with irreclaimable brutes, and that the only way to cure criminals and prevent crime is to inflict physical pain. I hold that to propose at this time of day such a retrograde measure is a survival in the minds of hon. Members of antiquated prejudices, and a love of a system which I had hoped humanity and civilisation had completely swept away. I, for my part, and I speak the minds of all my colleagues in this respect, shall never be content until we see the punishment of the lash completely wiped out of the Statute Book of the country. We hold this view not because we condemn these abominable crimes less than you do. I thank God that these crimes are very much less frequent in my country than in yours. We believe the true way to lessen these crimes is not by increasing the savagery and brutality of the punishment, not by imitating

the brutality of the criminals whom you wish to punish or reform, but to turn your minds in a totally different direction to trace the well-springs of crime, and to reform the criminals. In that way you will produce a better feeling among the poorer classes of the country, who are subject to great temptations. Consider the evil surroundings in which they are brought up, and make some allowance for the other circumstances of their lives, and direct all your efforts to eradicating crime, not by brutal punishments, which no nation has ever succeeded in doing, but by intelligent and scientific treatment of the criminals—a task in which this country has been hitherto lamentably deficient.

*COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle): I wish to say a few words on this subject. I confess that the Home Secretary's speech did not carry conviction to my mind. When I saw on the Notice Paper that a debate was to take place on a Bill to inflict corporal punishment on ruffians who commit these crimes, I said, "At last the House of Commons is going to discuss a measure of what I call social reform; and I hope they will arrive at a decision to support the Bill by a very large majority." Whether that will be the result or not, it is impossible for me to say; but I intend to go into the lobby in support of the Bill, for I consider that it will be fraught with very beneficial results. An ounce of fact is better than a pound of theory. An hon. Member said that no officer in this House would have the audacity to advocate the introduction of flogging in the Army. Well, I entered the Army in the days when the traditions of the Duke of Wellington still obtained; and I have seen many a man have three dozen lashes well laid on, and I never knew a man the worse for the punishment, but often the better. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] That applied very well in those old days of the British soldier, but in these days we have a better class of men in the Army, and flogging is seldom necessary. I do consider, however, that it was unwise to take away the power of having the penalty of flogging in reserve if the court on calm deliberation thought it necessary for serious offences against discipline? However, that is not the question before the House. The question now is whether the punishment of flogging ruffians will or will not be a deterrent in the present day. The Home Secretary says that the practice of garrotting was put a stop to before the punishment of flogging was introduced. If the right hon. Gentleman had not said so I should have maintained the contrary; but he cut the ground from my feet. What I would say is that, in my opinion, if the House will place the power in the hands of the judges to administer flogging when they think it right to do so, that the doing so will have the effect of stopping crimes of violence to an extent the House little dreams of, and it is in that belief that I intend to support the measure as a healthy social reform.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I confess I listened with extreme surprise to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Bootle, who stood up at this time of day and recommended the use of the lash in the Army. I hope that every soldier in the Army will hear of that speech, and that every military person and their friends connected with his constituency will pay due attention to the fact that he has declared himself in favour of a practice in the Army which was by almost common consent abolished, and which, I believe, would not receive the slightest support in this House from any Gentleman calling himself gallant, except the hon. Member. The Irish Members are proud that it was the late Mr. Parnell who took the largest part in the agitation for the abolition of the lash in the Army. For his action on that occasion he received the thanks of the Irish soldiers, and I have reason to know a kindly feeling still exists towards him in the rank and file of the Army. In regard to the question before the House, everybody thoroughly recognises the public spirit which permeates the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill in formulating the idea of preventing if possible a recurrence of these abominable crimes, and in giving an opportunity to the House of discussing what can be done to discourage these outrages. But would the use of the lash be a deterrent? I do not believe it would be in the slightest degree. I believe what the late Home Secretary said was perfectly true, that three-fourths of these crimes are committed under the influence of passion and drink or both combined, and that these unfortunate men never considered

ther their punishment would be the or imprisonment. I firmly believe a long and rigorous term of imprison- t would have an infinitely more rrent effect than the lash, which takes he self-respect out of a human being, makes him more of a savage than n he committed the crime. I must that it does not say much for the gress of civilisation in this country, there exists amongst us a certain s of society of such a savage spirit as old that you are obliged to seriously sider whether you are not to go back to the old methods of torture used in the Dark Ages. As an Irish Member I refer with pride to the fact that abominable offences of this kind are conspicuous by their absence in Ireland. Of course a crime of this nature is occasionally committed in Ireland, but no case has been made out for the punishment of the lash as a protection of women and children in Ireland.

Question put.

The House divided.—Ayes, 72; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 89.)

AYES.

and-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
old, Alfred
inson, Rt. Hon. John
d, John George Alexander
lwin, Alfred
bury, Frederick George
ch, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
ch, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants.
wnaggree, Sir M. M.
l, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
l, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
rrington, Spencer
lington, Sir William
ill, Douglas Harry
en, Benjamin Louis
itt, Hon. Henry
ny, Colonel
ghty, George
lell, Sir T. George
usson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r)
h, George H
ay, Sir R. Bannatyne
at, John Saunders
lsworthy, Major-General
bury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Labouchere, Henry
Lafone, Alfred
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Morrison, Walter
Mount, William George
Murray, Rt Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlep'l)
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seton-Karr, Henry
Shaw, Chas. E. (Stafford)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrw)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Uni.
Tomlinson, Wm. Ed. Murray
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt-Col. A. C. E. (Taunt'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Wharton and Mr. Halsey.

NOES.

aham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
aham, William (Rhondda)
n, William (Gateshead)
son, Robert Andrew
truther, H. T.
ol, Sir William
er, Alexander
ton, Thomas Gair
tin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
tin, M. (Limerick, W.)
ey, James (Walworth)
lie, James E. B. (Inverness
ridge, Emerson
er, Sir John
our, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
low, John Emmott
nes, Frederic Gorell
y, E. (Cork, S.)
rose, Sir Henry Howe
ell, Augustine
idell, Colonel Henry
lnois, Edmund
les, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
les, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
sey, Albert
g, John
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burns, John
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow
Carew, James Laurence
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Daly, James
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (Southampton)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, Wm. Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibney, James

Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Remnant, James F.
Renton, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
Robinson, Brooke
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James P. (Lanark)
Spencer, Ernest
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Watson, Eugene
Weetman, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woods, Samuel
Wrightson, Thomas
Yerburgh, Alexander
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lloyd Morgan and Mr. H. D. Greene.

[illegible] unskilled labour [illegible] mines in the West [illegible] might not [illegible] as the masters were [illegible] dangerous to the lives of the [illegible] right to provide [illegible] enter a mine be- [illegible] he should not be [illegible] to raise the [illegible] might be employed in [illegible] thirteen, and to de- [illegible] hours for which [illegible] from fifty-four [illegible] The Bill further en- [illegible] power for the pre- [illegible] of the relatives [illegible] accident at the [illegible] power to inspect the [illegible] accident happened. [illegible] for the formation of a [illegible] which should draw up [illegible] and that the board was a [illegible] was shown by the fact that a district board should consist of three persons—a chairman, who was to be an impartial man unconnected with mines in every way, a representative of the owners

[illegible] The Act of [illegible] although [illegible] allowed women working [illegible] provided that two might do so.

or employers, and a representative of the workmen, thus giving the chairman the casting vote, and constituting him, as it were, the umpire as between the views of the two parties. Clause 12 provided that shelters should be provided for the check weighers representing the miners. At some collieries shelters were provided as a matter of courtesy, but the promoters of the Bill felt that they should be provided as a matter of right. Another clause provided for the appointment of assistant inspectors. One inspector and two assistants would be utterly unable to properly inspect the mines in his district. In view of the lateness of the hour he did not propose to go into further detail, although there were several matters which ought to be gone into. The Bill was the same which had been introduced in the last few sessions, and in his opinion it would do something to render more reasonable and more satisfactory the lot of those who worked in mines, and upon whose labour the commerce and industry of the country was to a very great extent dependent. He moved the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Barlow.*)

*MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow) did not think it would be wise to go into the provisions of such an important Bill at so late an hour. The Bill had been before the House of Commons for the last five years, but owing to the exigencies of the ballot it had never had an opportunity of being discussed, and taking into consideration the fact that it was thirteen years since the Mines Regulations Bill passed into law, the House would agree that some amendment had become necessary. The Bill was admittedly of a far-reaching character, but he thought that after a little consideration the two parties interested might arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement. He would like to point out that if the House allowed the Second Reading, any necessary alterations might be made in Committee, and useful work done in several important particulars. The Check Weighing Clause introduced into the 1872 Mines Regulations Act, and improved in the Act of 1887, was an unmixed blessing from which the owners had derived as much advantage as the men. By the Bill before the House it was suggested that shelters should be provided for the men who had to do the weighing up of the coal at the pit bank. Many owners or employers had done everything they could in this matter, but notably in the case of mines in the West of Scotland. The check-weighers who represent the owners had shelters, whilst the representatives of the men had not. He trusted that the Home Office and hon. Gentlemen representing the colliery interest would agree to the Second Reading, leaving the details to be threshed out in Committee.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said he was not at all surprised that the Bill had hitherto failed to pass, but he would be surprised if it were introduced five or six times more and even then succeeded in passing. He was very far from saying that there were not some good points in the measure. Everyone would agree that the clause raising the age at which children were to be employed was excellent, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean had a Bill dealing with that particular matter, and as there was no opposition to that Bill, the object of this clause in the Bill before the House was disposed of. There were twenty-eight clauses in the Bill, and it was impossible to deal with them adequately in the short time at the disposal of the House. But, shortly stated, the Bill was one to enable the collieries of England to be managed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with the aid of a gentleman who knew nothing about mines, of another gentleman who was an owner of mines, of a third gentleman who was a workman in a mine, and of any person who chose to make any suggestion of any sort or kind. A more extraordinary proposal it was impossible for the mind of man to conceive. There was a tendency nowadays to say that no man should manage his property in the way he thought best, and the House of Commons was to be continually interfering in the business relationships of the country. Such a thing would undoubtedly have the result of destroying the prosperity of all the industries of the country. The first clause provided for the making of special rules, but there was nothing to show by whom they were to be made. The chairman, who knows nothing about the matter, might make what rules he liked, and those rules, whatever they were, were to be observed. Then the way in which it was proposed in Clause 2

[illegible]

[illegible] Eight of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES ACT 1891 AMENDMENT BILL.

Considered in Committee; Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE TRAMWAYS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I wish to put a question to the Government with regard to the order of business for to-morrow. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the absence of the Leader of the House will say whether the arrangement for to-morrow by which the new Education Code is to be discussed after the Committee stage of the Finance Bill has been disposed of can be varied and if so, when the subject will be put down. Important private business, as I understand, will precede the Finance Bill to-morrow, and may take considerable time, and it is not likely that the Finance Bill will be got through before ten o'clock.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Government will be most willing to accede to the request of the right hon. Gentleman. To-morrow night the First Lord of the Treasury will state what facilities can be given for the discussion of the Education Code. It is possible he may propose a morning sitting on Tuesday.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) asked what Supply would be taken on Friday.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said the Education Code could hardly be discussed with any advantage or finality until the proposals of the Government on secondary education were announced, and he hoped a day would be fixed after those proposals had been placed before the House.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think the discussion of the Education Code can be postponed until the proposals with regard to secondary education are forthcoming, but I have no doubt that my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury will consider the point raised by the noble Lord. The business to-morrow will be the Committee stage of the Finance Bill and the Railway Accidents Bill. I am unable to say what Supply will be taken on Friday.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) asked if the motion with regard to municipal trading would be taken, or whether it was intended to drop it out of the Paper.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No.

Adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 29th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with—

Portland Urban District Gas.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY BOARD BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

COWES PIER BILL [H.L.].

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

EXMOUTH AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill; Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

PONTEFRACT PARK BILL.

COLONIAL BANK BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

LINCOLN CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

GRANTHAM GAS BILL.

REDHILL GAS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN AND WATERFORD AND CENTRAL IRELAND RAILWAY COMPANIES AMALGAMATION BILL [H.L.].

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN AND WATERFORD, LIMERICK, AND WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANIES AMALGAMATION [H.L.].

MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY OF IRELAND BILL [H.L.].

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): My Lords, I beg to move that the Bills mentioned in the notice standing in my name be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament. This follows a precedent set by your Lordships' House last week when the Dublin Corporation Bill, and another Bill which depended upon it, were referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses.* This procedure is, as I said on that occasion, a somewhat novel one; but with regard to these particular Bills, which deal with the very important question of the amalgamation of railways in the south of Ireland, I think there is a distinct precedent for the course proposed in the case of other Amalgamation Bills which were referred, in 1873, in the same way as I am now proposing, to a Joint Committee of the two Houses.† The Bills are very important in character, and will have a very large effect, especially on the South and Central parts of Ireland They were referred to a Hybrid Committee of the House of Commons last year, and the inquiry was of a very protracted, and, if I may be allowed to say so, of a not wholly satisfactory nature. I trust your Lordships will assent to the motion which I now move.

Moved to resolve, That it is desirable that the—

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.],

The Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.],

And the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.],

be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

* See page 3 of this volume.

† See debate on 25th February, 1873, on Railway, &c. (Transfer and Amalgamation), Bills. *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. ccxiv., page 886.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: My Lords, I have given notice to move, as an Amendment to the motion of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, to add the following words:—

"And that the said Committee be empowered to inquire and report with reference to the said Bills—

1. What special safeguards (if any), having regard to the circumstances of the South of Ireland, are required for the protection of the public in the event of any of the amalgamations proposed in the said Bills being carried out other than the safeguards afforded by existing Public Acts; and

2. As to the propriety of inserting in the common form clause (No. 38 in the first named Bill and No. 33 in the model Bill) making provision as to general Railway Acts, special words providing for further State interference with railways in Ireland."

I do not wish to take up the time of the House unnecessarily, and before moving my Amendment I would appeal to the noble Earl to postpone his motion for a few days. He has already kindly postponed it, at my request, from last Monday, but the object for which I asked that the matter should be postponed has not been attained. A large and very important deputation waited on the Irish Government about a week ago to ask for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the whole question of Irish railways. They asked, further, that these particular Bills should be suspended until that Commission had reported. The answer to that prayer has not yet been given, and all I would ask the noble Earl at the moment is that he should postpone this motion until the answer of the Government has been received. If a Commission should be appointed I take it that the Bills would be suspended, and that there would be no occasion for the appointment of a Joint Committee. Therefore it is material that the answer of the Government should be given before we are asked to affirm that it is desirable to appoint a Joint Committee. If the Government refuse the Commission, then I should most heartily concur with the noble Earl that a Joint Committee would be a very much better tribunal to discuss these important Bills than a Hybrid Committee of the House of Commons, or an ordinary Private Bill Committee. But until we know what the answer of the Government is I venture to submit that it is somewhat premature to bring this motion forward.

*LORD GREVILLE: In the absence of my noble friend Viscount de Vesci, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees whether it is possible to give instructions to the Joint Committee that no further powers should be granted unless a promise is given that the railway will be extended from Mountmellick to Mullingar, a distance of about thirty miles. The County Council of West Meath have petitioned for this extension, and they will appear in the proper course.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: In reply to the question put to me by the noble Lord who has just sat down, I would point out that instructions are never given in this House to Private Bill Committees. I think it would be very unfortunate indeed if this precedent were broken into in any case, and it would be specially inconvenient in the case of a Joint Committee of an exceptionally strong character. The House is really not in a position to understand the bearings of the condition which my noble friend would wish to instruct the Committee to insert. It will be open to him to lay his views, or the views of those he represents, before the Committee, who, I have no doubt, will give them the consideration they deserve. On these grounds I should deprecate most strongly any attempt at binding the discretion of the Committee. With regard to the question of my noble friend Lord Monteagle of Brandon as to the postponement of the motion, I would point out that I have already consented to allow the Bills to stand over from last Monday till to-day. I have great difficulty in consenting to any further postponement. It is very important that the question should be sent down to the House of Commons before we rise for the Easter holidays, and that we should, if possible, get an answer from the Commons before that time arrives. Of course, that would be impossible if I postponed the Bills again till next week, or till a later period. Moreover, I venture to suggest to the House that the case of my noble friend for a further postponement is not a very strong one. He spoke of a Commission to inquire generally into the legislation regarding Irish railways. I presume that the noble Lord would have no idea of referring these individual Bills to such a Commission. These Bills must be dealt with by

Parliament, either in a Joint Committee or in the ordinary Committees of the two Houses. I imagine, judging from the length of time inquiries by Commission take, that it is not likely that such an inquiry by a Commission, if it is granted, would be completed in sufficient time to enable these Bills to be dealt with in the present session of Parliament. It is hardly fair to the promoters or, indeed, to the opponents of the Bills, that the consideration of them should be further postponed.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: Will the noble Earl tell me whether I should have an opportunity of moving my Amendment at a later stage in the event of a Commission not being granted?

THE EARL OF MORLEY: It is open to the noble Lord to move an Amendment such as that of which he has given notice at a later stage. If the House of Commons assent to the appointment of a Joint Committee it will then be my duty to make a motion appointing the Committee. The noble Lord can move his Amendment then, but I think it right to inform him that I shall feel myself bound to oppose it.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: Then I need not trouble the House by moving my Amendment to-day.

On Question, agreed to.

Ordered, that a Message be sent to the Commons to communicate this Resolution, and to desire their concurrence.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS.

Annual Series: No. 2,392. Trade of Curaçoa and its Dependencies.

CHINA, No. 1 (1900).

Further correspondence respecting the affairs of China (in continuation of China, Nos. 1 and 2. (1899)).

COLONIES.

Papers relating to university education of Roman Catholics in certain colonies.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES).

Rule, dated 19th March, 1900, under the Land Purchase Acts.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) ACT, 1896 (RULES).

Order in Council, dated 22nd March, 1900, amending the Railways (Ireland) Order, 1897.

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.

Account of moneys received and paid by the Chamberlain of the City of London in relation to the Metropolitan Cattle Market, for the year 1899; also an account of extraordinary works executed other than general repairs for the same period.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS).

Draft Orders in Council for the establishment of the metropolitan boroughs of Chelsea, Finsbury, Kensington, and Paddington, and incorporating the councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act) and to be printed. (No. 40.)

COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this Bill is, for the most part, word for word the same Bill that passed through the Select Committee of your Lordships' House last year. In two particulars, however, it differs. The International Copyright Clauses have been re-drafted by Lord Thring, who has had the advice of the Foreign Office. The Committee are under a very deep obligation to Lord Thring for having undertaken this exceedingly difficult task, and for re-drafting the international clauses in such a way as to make them free from objection. Lord Thring has added to the Bill certain Custom House Clauses in order to facilitate its working. The question of colonial copyright was very carefully considered

Colonial Office or of the colonies, but of the promoters of this Bill.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I do not wish to commit myself to the merits of the alteration, but I think it only right, in justice to the noble Lord who drafted the Bills, to say that he had to deal with a mass of confusion which none but a lawyer could properly appreciate, and that he has managed with wonderful skill to evolve harmony and clearness out of that confusion.

*LORD THRING: I am grateful to the noble and learned Lord for the praise he has bestowed on this Bill. I cannot imagine what the Colonial Office really mean. The Bill, so far as the Colonial Clauses are concerned, is practically the same as the Bill of last year. It is true that the International Clauses have been changed, but that has been done with the approbation of the Foreign Office. So far as the Colonial Clauses are concerned, there is, as I have said, no substantial difference whatever between the present Bill and that of last year.

*LORD MONKSWELL: The noble Earl the Under Secretary for the Colonies is mistaken in assuming that any alteration has been made in the Colonial Clauses.

On Question agreed to; Bill read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee.

The following Lords were named of the Select Committee—

L. Chancellor.
E. Selborne.
V. Knutsford.
L. Balfour.
L. Hatherton.
L. Monkswell.
L. Thring.
L. Farrer.
L. Welby.
L. Davey.
L. Avebury.

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Twelve o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

COPYRIGHT (ARTISTIC) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, this Bill comes before the House under totally different circumstances from those of the Literary Copyright Bill. The latter Bill passed through a Select Committee of your Lordships' House, but the evidence with regard to the Artistic Copyright Bill was not completed. This Bill has been absolutely and entirely redrafted by Lord Thring, and it therefore differs, not only in form, but to a considerable extent in substance, from the Bill of last year. I believe, however, that those interested in the production and sale of works of art will greatly prefer the Bill as it now stands to the Bill of last year. Whereas last year the Bill proposed certain restrictions on copyright, both as to the place of producing the artistic work and the nationality of the producer, and as to registration, the Bill as it at present stands sweeps away every one of those conditions and gives the widest possible copyright. In the Bill of last year, also, a longer and a shorter term of copyright were given for different kinds of artistic work. This Bill, again, sweeps away those distinctions, and gives the longer term to every description of artistic work. There are, no doubt, other more or less substantial differences between this Bill and the Bill of last year, which are the result, to a great extent, of the evidence that was put before us. I will not attempt to point out these differences, partly because I admit that this Bill is put before the House in a tentative form, and partly because there was such a great difference of opinion between the witnesses who were examined as to the interpretation of last year's Bill that I am not able to say with confidence in what particulars this Bill differs from the one of last year. Whilst for the form we are indebted to Lord Thring, as regards the substance of the measure Lord Knutsford and myself were consulted, and the Bill in its present form must be considered as being not only agreed to by Lord Thring and myself, but also by Lord Knutsford.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and referred to a Select Committee.

The Lords following were named of the Select Committee—

L. Chancellor.
E. Selborne.
V. Knutsford.

L. Balfour.
L. Hatherton.
L. Monkswell.
L. Thring.
L. Farrer.
L. Welby.
L. Davey.
L. Avebury.

The Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Twelve o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

COLONIAL DEFENCE.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I rise to ask Her Majesty's Government (1) whether the duty of self-defence is imposed on a self-governing colony; (2) whether, in the event of war between Her Majesty and a Foreign Power, a self-governing colony can declare itself neutral; (3) whether a Colonial Government which declines to call out its forces or otherwise defend the colonial territory against invasion is liable to compensate those who suffer damage within the territory from the enemy. I must ask the indulgence of your Lordships while I say a few words upon these questions. They refer to the relations between the mother country and her colonies which possess responsible government. Although I am referring in a special sense, and, perhaps, almost exclusively, to the British Empire and the colonies of the British Empire, because Great Britain alone has pursued a system of education and of watching her colonies with the view of ultimately conferring upon them the benefits of responsible self-government, I think your Lordships will also see that these questions refer chiefly to the colonies of South Africa, and to the position of affairs there at the present time, as they have been revealed to us by the Papers which have just recently been laid upon the Table. Responsible government, of course, implies certain privileges and also certain obligations, but so far as I have been able to ascertain Great Britain, when conferring the privileges of responsible self-government, has not as a rule laid down in definite words the corresponding obligations which the colony might be expected to assume. The duty of self defence is naturally one of the obligations which a colony receiving self government might be expected to assume: but the first notice of it that appears in Parliament is in a resolution passed in the year 1862* without a division, on the Motion of Mr. Arthur Mills:—

"Resolved, that this House, while it fully recognises the claim of all portions of the British Empire on Imperial aid against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, is of opinion that colonies exercising the rights of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security, and ought to assist in their own external defence."

The next case, and, perhaps, the most important, is that which is to be found in the Confederation of Canada Act, 1867, but there all duties connected with self defence are expressly reserved for treatment by the Colonial Parliament. The clause runs thus:—

"The exclusive authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to Militia, Military, and Naval service and defence."

In this case, the duty, which is more implied than expressed in other instances, is openly and explicitly stated. When we come to the case of the Cape of Good Hope we find that responsible Government was given in a rather peculiar manner. It came into existence there through the medium of an Act of the Colonial Legislature, which enabled Ministers to sit in Parliament, and which thereby conveyed the privileges of self-government without further direct allusion to that fact. That Act was passed in 1872. But in the Colonial Forces Act, 1892, whereby the Governor appears as Commander-in-Chief, it is stated in the interpretation clause that the word "Governor" means "Governor acting in Council." Therefore, when acting as Commander-in-Chief within the colony the Governor acts by and with the advice of his responsible Ministers. As to a colony declaring itself neutral, I should have thought the position perfectly clear and distinct. The colonies, of course, have no representation abroad, and they have no foreign policy of their own. They are not consulted with regard to war, and if it had not been for the statement which is contained in Papers recently laid upon the Table, I should certainly not have thought it worth while to put the question. But, my Lords, on a recent occasion in the Cape Parliament, when there was a very important debate with reference to the passing of ammu-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. clxv., page 1032.

nition through Cape Colony into the Orange Free State, Mr. Schreiner, the Prime Minister, in the course of the debate, used very remarkable and very important words.* He had been saying that he believed there was very little chance of war; he was thoroughly persuaded that there would be no war. He said—

"If I am still to see, despite my best hopes and my deep convictions, that South Africa is to be the scene of war between whites, that one race is to be set against another race in any part of Africa, I shall still say—and I say this to-day, not merely to this colony, but to South Africa and he world—that I shall do my very best to maintain for this colony the position of standing apart and aloof from the struggle, both with regard to its forces and with regard to its people."

Those words are very important words, and, of course, public attention was directed to them. It was some days later, in speaking to the High Commissioner (Sir Alfred Milner), that Mr. Schreiner expressed the feeling that he had been greatly misunderstood. Perhaps your Lordships will allow me to read a short passage from the despatch in which Sir Alfred Milner describes what passed.†

He says—

"In the course of conversation, Mr. Schreiner expressed the feeling that his explanations on the subject in the House of Assembly had been greatly misunderstood. He protested against his words being interpreted as a declaration that the Colony should remain neutral in case of hostilities between Her Majesty's Government and the South African Republic. He had never harboured such an idea. I replied that in my opinion his words were open to this construction, and that I regretted them. In reply, he went on to explain at some length his point of view. The gist of it was that, while he fully admitted that in case of war between Her Majesty's Government and any other State, this Colony could not be neutral, yet he felt that in the interests of the Empire itself the two main objects which Colonial Ministers should, in that case, keep in view, would be to prevent civil war breaking out in the colony and to guard against the dangers of a native rising. Undoubtedly the forces of the colony should be employed to protect the colony, and he would regard any Minister as most culpable who ran any risk of damage being done to the colony, either from the South African Republic or the Orange Free State."

In those words the Prime Minister retracted what was the natural impression obtained from his remarks, and practically undertook that in the event of war he would call out the forces of the colony for its protection. Unhappily, with regard to the war itself, he was wrong. I thoroughly believe, so far as one can judge from reading the Papers, that from the very first Mr. Schreiner was persuaded—and not only was he persuaded but he was assured by President Steyn and others—that there would be no war; but unfortunately those assurances were not fulfilled. But when the war arose, did he call out the forces of the colony? Just before the outbreak of the war considerable irritation existed at Cape Town, because whilst ammunition and guns had been permitted to pass freely into the Free State, requests for ammunition and guns to be sent to Kimberley and other parts of the colony had been refused. Mr. Schreiner was, no doubt, fully persuaded that his reasons were good ones. He said there would be no war, and that there was no reason for sending ammunition, but when the war broke out, if other means had not been taken to arm Kimberley, it would, of necessity, have fallen owing to the action of the Colonial Government. There was also considerable dissatisfaction felt at Cape Town because Volunteers were not called out earlier than they were. However, on October 16, a few days after the war commenced, the Volunteers were called out and were placed under the control of Sir Redvers Buller. But a little later on—November 9—the Prime Minister took occasion to say that he would not call out the burghers for the defence of the colony, and he sent a minute to Sir Alfred Milner embodying that statement. He enclosed a circular which he had sent to the Civil Commissioners and to the resident magistrates of the colony, and which ran as follows *—

"It has been represented to the Prime Minister that an impression exists that it is the intention of the Government to call out the burgher forces of this colony. The Prime Minister desires me, therefore, to inform you, and to direct you to give all possible publicity to the fact, that it is not intended to call out the burgher forces, that it is considered that the military forces of the Crown are sufficient to preserve, or, in case of a temporary incursion of the enemy, to restore order, and that all that is expected by the Government of the ordinary citizen is that he should remain loyal to Her Majesty, and give no countenance or

* See Command Paper No. 43 (1900). "Further Correspondence Relating to Affairs in South Africa," page 29.

† *Ibid.*, page 33.

* See Blue-book last referred to, page 212.

assistance to her enemies now invading this colony."

Just consider what was the position of the Cape Colony at that particular moment. In Natal, Ladysmith had just been besieged. Kimberley was actually being beseiged. The north-east of the Cape Colony, and, indeed, the north, and I rather think even a portion of the west, were in rebellion, and under these circumstances one would have thought that the state of things was very critical as regarded the colony itself, and such as to justify, and, indeed, require any measure which it was in the power of the Colonial Ministers to take for the defence of the territory. As all events, that measure was not taken, and the result was that the colony suffered damage. The Colonial Ministers had not done all that was in their power to defend their territory. The injury was not confined to English colonists. Loyal Dutchmen have been looted just as much, and the question arises: Who is responsible for the damage which has been done? That is one of many similar questions which will have to be answered at no distant date. In the first instance, no doubt, the persons liable will be the Boers, who have done the damage, so far as it is possible to collect payment from them; but when you have passed from that point, pray who is then to be liable? Is it the British taxpayer, or does the recourse of the burghers who have suffered loss lie against their own Government, which did not do all that was in their power to protect them? This and similar questions must arise within a very short time. It is no good passing them by or attempting to ignore them. It is, usually, our unhappy fate to be too late in the consideration of African affairs, and it is much better that these things should be brought before the public now and be considered before the time for their solution arrives. I beg to ask the questions standing in my name.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: The questions of the noble Lord are certainly very wide ones, and they are not made easier to answer by the fact that they have an abstract form about them which renders specific language rather difficult. I wish to guard myself, in endeavouring to answer these questions, from any attempt to frame new maxims on the complicated constitutional problems that are involved. The first question is whether the duty of self-defence is imposed on a self-governing colony. I took that question, in the first instance, to mean self-defence in the event of actual invasion. If that had been the question, of course the answer is that a self-governing colony is bound to do all it can in defence of its own territory against invasion, but I should add that there is also an obligation of honour, which we hold to be absolute, on the mother country to do what she can to assist the colony. But I rather gather from the speech of the noble Earl that he referred not to a condition of affairs resulting from actual invasion, but to what I may call the general position as between a self-governing colony and the mother country in normal times of peace. Well, if I am right in supposing that that was the point to which he wished to direct our attention, the answer is not difficult. The relations between the mother country and the self-governing colonies in respect of an attack from the sea are, in general principles, that the land defence lies in the sphere of the self-governing colony and the defence of the coaling stations or from sea attack lies with the mother country. The cases where a self-governing colony is liable to land invasion are so special that no general principles have ever been laid down in connection with them that I am aware of. As regards the second question—whether, in the event of war between Her Majesty and a foreign Power, a self-governing colony can declare itself neutral—it is perfectly obvious that no part of Her Majesty's dominions can claim to be at peace with a Power with which Her Majesty is at war. Now, the third question—whether a Colonial Government which declines to call out its forces or otherwise defend the colonial territory against invasion is liable to compensate those who suffer damage within the territory from the enemy—presents a purely abstract proposition, because there is no case to the point in connection with the war in South Africa. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Government of Natal has done all it can to use the colonial forces to repel the invasion of its territory, and it would be perfectly unjust to say that the Cape Government had declined to call out its forces. It has called out its Volunteers. It has called out its forces to the extent

to which it, and I may also say the Government, consider it wise that they should be called out. I do not go into the question of the exact moment at which they were called out, nor into the rather wide points involved in the word "otherwise" in the noble Lord's question. I must not be understood to say that on every point and in every particular the Cape Ministry has held the views of others who are responsible in connection with the war, but it would not be just or accurate to say that the Cape Government declined to call out its forces; and, in connection with the special point the noble Lord brought forward with respect to the burgher forces, I think it must have occurred to him that some of the burgher forces had much better not have been called out, because it is only a matter of common notoriety that we could not rely on the loyalty of all the burgher forces. Then, my Lords, when I am asked whether such a Government, on the hypothesis in question, is under a certain liability, I must decline altogether to lay down the law on a point which, I think, would puzzle even constitutional lawyers to answer—namely, what is liability, and under what conditions would liability intervene. All I can say in answer to the question of the noble Lord—and I would point out that he has only referred in this question to one class of possible damage consequent upon a state of warfare—is that the damage arises from other causes than that referred to in the question. What Her Majesty's Government have aimed at from the beginning, and have openly avowed, is to endeavour to exact compensation to those to whom it is due from those who have caused the damage. The questions involved in compensation are very complicated and difficult. They concern the Colonial Government as well as Her Majesty's Government. The first care and anxiety in the question of compensation naturally lie with the Colonial Governments, who are, in the first place, responsible to the parties supposed to be injured, and it is for them to take steps in co-operation with Her Majesty's Government to see that compensation is exacted from those who caused the damage and paid to those who have suffered. All I can say is that this is, and must be, a matter of co-operation and consultation between the Colonial Governments and Her Majesty's Government. The question has not for a moment been lost sight of, but is now under careful consideration.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]—FUNDS AVAILABLE.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, the Motion which stands in my name is not conceived in any feeling of hostility towards the Education (Scotland) Bill. On the contrary, I believe that if the Secretary for Scotland can give the Return for which I ask in a sufficiently detailed form it will provide further data for argument in support of the Bill, and may also have the effect of providing even further funds to be devoted to the purposes of the Bill. The history of the last fifteen years has been rich in instances of grants-in-aid, equivalent grants, and the like. Indeed, I think that those who have not followed the subject closely may well be bewildered with regard to their number and the purposes for which they have been used, and, while I do not for a moment question the good intent of those grants or the way in which they have been applied by the various local bodies, yet I cannot but feel that the utmost benefit has not been got out of them, that in many instances they have been frittered away without conferring as much advantage as they might upon the localities to which they were given, and that even in the cases where they have been applied to the relief of rates, or nominally to the relief of rates, the relief has been infinitesimal, and they have been used rather as funds for extra expenditure which might not properly be charged on the rates. Three of these funds are taken hold of, consolidated, and applied for the purposes of the Bill, but in the speech which my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland made in introducing the Bill* he adumbrated an intention or the possibility of laying some charge on the £100,000 Equivalent Grant. It is with regard to each of the three funds which are named within the four corners of the Bill that I ask this Return, and also with regard to the £100,000 Equivalent Grant which is not specially named in the Bill, but which, I hope, may be charged to some extent for the purposes of the Bill.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 1031 (16th March, 1900).

tion (by leave of the House) with-
n.

CATION, ETC., SCHEMES—ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I have put down this Resolution for a Standing Order of the House in order to stop up a gap—not a very large one—in the working of our machinery. At present there are a certain number of Commissions and other bodies which have legislative powers to this extent—that they can make a scheme and lay it on the Table of the two Houses of Parliament, and then it becomes law at the end of a certain time if no Address is presented against it. It is obviously a considerable abuse, and if the matter was of importance it would be a grave abuse, but by the delay of the printer in circulating a scheme nobody knows of its existence until a few days before the power of arresting it has expired. I have known it run very near to the edge of the time that is allowed. That, clearly, is an abuse, the possibility of which ought not to exist. I want to avoid using any language which would intimate that any serious miscarriage of justice or of public policy has taken place; but, still, it is an error that ought to be prevented, and it will be prevented by saying that the laying on the Table—a matter over which we have control—shall not take place until the scheme is printed, and that, when it is printed, it shall be circulated to peers.

Ordered, That where by Statute any scheme before it can be sanctioned by Order in Council is ordered to lie on the Table for a prescribed number of days, it shall be laid on the Table in a printed form, and not otherwise; and thereupon shall forthwith be circulated to the Members of this House.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

COMMISSIONS FOR YEOMANRY OFFICERS.

LORD NEWTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is able to state the conditions upon which commissions in the Regular cavalry will be granted to Yeomanry officers.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: We propose to give one commission in the cavalry to each Yeomanry brigade, upon the following conditions:—The candidate must be medically fit. Selected candidates will have to attend before the medical board in London; their age must be above twenty and under thirty, and they must be unmarried. These are the only conditions.

RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS IN THE MILITIA.

LORD RAGLAN: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will modify the rule by which retired officers of the Army who are serving in the Militia are, on embodiment, deprived of their retired pay or pension, or deprived of 5 per cent. per annum on the amount of any gratuity they may have received for past services, and at the same time will not be permitted to receive the gratuity which is payable to Militia officers under certain circumstances on disembodiment. I hope your Lordships will allow me to say a few words with regard to this question, first, because of the great importance of the subject, and, secondly, because my noble friend near me says the question is involved. If your Lordships will bear with me for a few moments I will give you some instances of how this rule really works. The general rule is that an officer on full pay cannot receive half pay or retired pay. Therefore, when a retired Army officer who is in receipt of retired pay or a pension of any description is embodied with his Militia, and thereby goes on full pay, he loses his retired pay or his pension as the case may be. The working of this rule is exceedingly hard in many ways. Take the case of two officers who have served together in the Army, and who leave the Army at the same time on retired pay or pensions. One officer goes into the Militia, while the other retires into private life. On the embodiment of the Militia in the event of war or for any other reason the retired officer who belongs to the Militia is called up to do duty with the Militia, and the officer who has done nothing and is still in receipt of a pension is called back to do duty with the Army. The latter officer, on returning to duty in the Army, received a gratuity of £100 to provide himself with uniform. He has for a certain number of years done nothing whatever except draw his pension, sit in his club, and smoke cigarettes. He has not

served his country in any way. The other officer has entered the Militia and done much hard work, but he does not get the £100. Again, when the Militia are disembodied, the officers of Militia, having been embodied for a certain amount of time, are entitled to a gratuity, but an ex-officer of the Army is not entitled to this gratuity. Therefore, to use a common phrase, he is "had" both ways. I am sure the rule was never intended to work in that way. Another important question is the amount which is deducted from officers who have received gratuities. Some officers retire from the Army having received a lump sum down, but the War Office proceed to deduct five per cent. per annum from the pay of these officers, when they are embodied, on the original amount of their gratuity. I met this afternoon a relative of my own who is in command of embodied Militia who is having deducted the sum of £61 per annum. I do not like to characterise the action of the War Office in this matter as usurious, but five per cent. is an ideal interest which no one can get in these days, and the reduction of five per cent. seems to me more worthy of the late lamented Isaac Gordon than of the Government of a great country. I hope the noble Marquess will see his way to remove this great injustice.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My noble friend has explained a somewhat intricate case with much graphic power, though not, I think, with absolute accuracy on one or two points of detail. He told your Lordships, with truth, that the practice has always been not to allow a retired officer who is re-employed to draw both his retired pay and the pay of the post in which he is newly employed. I do not think that that is, in principle, an unreasonable rule. The theory is that when an officer retires on a pension, the State has a lien upon him, and may recall him to the service. When he is so recalled, I think it is perfectly fair to tell him that he must for a time cease to receive his retired pay and be content with the pay of the post to which he has been appointed. The only exception from that rule of which I am aware is that of Militia and Yeomanry officers, who are allowed during the period of preliminary drill and training of their regiment to receive both retired pay and active pay. And as that exception existed we thought it a reasonable thing, in the case of embodied Militia, to allow officers for a period of one month to receive both active and retired pay. The noble Lord gave us the case of officers who had retired, not on a pension, but on a gratuity, and he dwelt upon the hardship of the present practice. It has certainly been the case that the gratuity received in certain cases by officers on their retirement has been regarded in the regulations as being in effect a commuted pension, and in order to avoid the disparity between the case of the officer who retires on a pension and the case of his brother officer who retires on a gratuity, it has been usual to deduct from the pay of the re-employed officer a sum which was considered to be equivalent to the income which he would have received if he had retired, not on a gratuity, but on a pension. I think there is a good deal to be said for the logic of that arrangement, but I am bound to say that, having considered the matter very attentively, I have come to the conclusion that the case is one in which it is perhaps not desirable to press logic too far. I do not think that when you come to consider the facts it is quite fair to contend that these gratuities are really commuted pensions. They are sums of money given to officers as a kind of inducement to them to retire at a comparatively early stage of their career, in order to expedite the flow of promotion. That, I believe, is the accurate history of these gratuities. That being so, I am inclined to hold that these gratuities should be regarded as final payments, and that it is not fair to make any deduction from the active pay of the re-employed officer. I will, therefore, not accept my noble friend's suggestion that the rate of deduction should be reduced, but I am prepared to say that the deduction from officers' pay, which has hitherto prevailed, will no longer be made. Then my noble friend spoke of the gratuity which is receivable by officers of embodied Militia battalions at the end of the embodiment. He is evidently under the impression that when a re-employed officer comes to the end of his embodied service, he is not considered entitled to the usual gratuity. That is a misapprehension of my noble friend's. The only case in which any doubt arises is the case in which a re-employed officer, on account of his re-employment,

becomes entitled to some addition to his existing pension or gratuity. Where that is the case we allow the officer to receive either the increase of his pension or gratuity to which his embodied service in the Militia entitles him, or to receive the usual gratuity received by other Militia officers. He may make the bargain which suits him best, and I am sure my noble friend will admit it would be impossible to treat him more fairly than that.

SUPERSESSION OF MILITIA OFFICERS.

LORD RAGLAN: I have one other question to ask the noble Marquess—namely, whether any decision has been arrived at as to the wholesale supersession of Militia officers in South Africa by officers of other and junior forces.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: When the noble Lord brought this matter before the House the other day I promised him I would take the advice of persons better acquainted with questions of military precedence than a civilian can pretend to be. I have taken that advice, and I am sorry to tell him that the only conclusion I can come to is that the supersession of which he complains must continue. I do not think he is quite correct when he describes it as the "supersession of militia officers in South Africa by officers of other and junior forces." What has happened is this. We have given to officers in the Imperial Yeomanry, to officers in certain Volunteer companies, and to Militia officers attached to Line regiments, commissions in the Regular Army. We did it in the cases of the Imperial Yeomanry and the Imperial Volunteers because the commissions of officers in these branches of the service did not confer upon them any right of command outside the United Kingdom. To meet that difficulty we had to enlist the men of the Imperial Yeomany and the Imperial Volunteers in the Regular Army, and to give to their officers commissions in the Regular Army, and the result has, no doubt, been that these officers, in virtue of holding these temporary commissions in the Regular Army, do take precedence of officers of the same rank in the Militia. I can understand that there may be some little feeling of sentiment about this matter; but I am assured that what we have done can really lead to very little practical inconvenience. The occasions upon which a senior Militia officer would find himself superseded or commanded by a junior officer of the same rank—say, of the Imperial Yeomanry—would be very few and far between. I would be very glad if my noble friend or anyone else would suggest a solution of the difficulty other than that which has commended itself to us; but up to the present it has not been forthcoming; and I rather put it to your Lordships that this is one of those minor inconveniences to which we have to submit in time of war. It is an emergency measure, and a measure of temporary operation. I have very often had to consider questions of supersession in the Army, and no doubt, when the case is one in which an officer or a number of officers are permanently superseded by their brother officers, the matter becomes very serious, because then the effect is a lasting one upon the career of the superseded officer; but in this case the matter is, as your Lordships are aware, merely one of temporary importance. These commissions in the Regular Army are given to officers of the Imperial Yeomanry and the Imperial Volunteers only while the war lasts. When the war is over the officers revert to their former positions, and the Militia officers will no longer be junior to them.

HOME DEFENSIVE FORCES.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Before the House adjourns I wish to put a question to my noble friend the Secretary of State for War, of which I have given him private notice. It refers to a motion which I have put down on the Paper for a future sitting. I have given notice to move for a Return showing the state and organisation of our home defensive force on 20th February, 1900. I wish to ask my noble friend whether he sees any objection to granting such a Return.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I can assure the noble Earl that I am most anxious not to withhold from him or from your Lordships' House any information upon such points as those which are referred to in the motion of which the noble Earl has given notice, but I must add that I believe it would be contrary to usage and not in the public interest that the Return should be given, and if the

* See page 425 of this Volume.

noble Earl moves for it I shall with much regret be obliged to ask the House not to give it to him.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I must consider whether or not I shall move for the Return. I admit that the terms of the Return are unusual, but the times are unusual. My noble friend is busily engaged in creating an emergency army, and it is an emergency Return that I am asking for, and one which I think we ought to have. If I go to the Foreign Military Attachés in this country I shall no doubt be able to get the information.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Though I object to the Return, I shall be very glad to give the noble Earl, if he will be good enough to ask me for it, any information or access to any official documents he may desire.

NEW BILL.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (IRELAND) BILL [Lords.]

A Bill to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors to children was presented by the Lord Sudley (E. Arran) (for the Viscount Templetown); read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. (No. 41.)

House adjourned at five minutes before Six of the clock till To-morrow half past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 29th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely—

London and India Docks Joint Committee Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill the Standing Orders have not been complied with, namely—

Portland Urban District Gas.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) BILL.

Ordered, that the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bill.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

AIRDRIE, COATBRIDGE, AND DISTRICT WATER TRUST BILL.

MORECAMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL GAS BILL.

OSSET CORPORATION GAS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE WATER BILL.

SPALDING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (WATER) BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords] [STAMP DUTIES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the imposition of the following Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present Session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society, namely—For and upon the First Memorial enrolled of the names of persons who shall be deemed, held, and taken to be Trustees of the Society, the sum of Five pounds; and upon every other such Memorial in which the name of any person shall for the first time be inserted as a Trustee of the Society, the sum of Five pounds.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

LOWESTOFT RAILWAY BILL.

Order [19th February] that the Lowestoft Railway Bill be committed, read, and discharged.

Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn. —(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

LONDON WATER (PURCHASE) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): When, on a previous occasion, I had to move the Second Reading of a Bill similar to this, the main object of my remarks was to establish the points that purchase was a good thing, that it was desirable, in the interests of the public, that there should be purchase by some public authority, and that the exigencies of the future supply of water to London would be best met by placing the various water undertakings in the hands of some public authority. But these points no longer need to be argued. A Royal Commission was established especially for the purpose of deciding, among other things, whether control or purchase was the right method of procedure in this matter, and it has undoubtedly reported with unanimity in favour of the purchase of the London water companies' undertakings by some public authority. I cannot but be glad that that contest, which lasted so many years, has been decided by so great an authority in the direction in which, on behalf of the London County Council, I urged in this House five years ago that it should be decided. I see it is stated by the opponents of the Bill that the measure which I have before the House now has been repeatedly brought forward. But, although in the year 1897 I did bring in a measure on somewhat similar lines, I would beg the House to remember that it differed in one or two important details from the Act of 1895, and that the first act of the present House was to reverse the decision taken in the previous session. I would also point out to hon. Gentlemen that the basis of the rejection of the Bill was that there had not been a sufficiently authoritative pronouncement upon the point whether the proper method of dealing with the London water companies was by control or purchase. That was the statement made by the President of the Local Government Board, who, speaking at the time on behalf of the Government, further indicated that his personal predilection was in the direction of control. The right hon. Gentleman said that a Commission ought to be appointed to set at rest that question. The Commission was accordingly appointed, and it has decided the point, and I think that the body which has hitherto promoted these Bills is only doing its duty in calling upon this House to supplement to the best of its ability the decision of that Royal Commission. It may be asked, Why not wait until next year? But I would remind the House that in 1895 I urged that the solution of the water question by purchase was urgent and pressing. Everything that has happened since that date has, I believe, shown the propriety of that statement, and that has occurred which I then suggested was likely to take place. Enormous extra concessions have been given to the various water companies. They have conferred upon those companies valuable assets which, if purchase had been carried out at the date I first brought it before the House, would have accrued in the hands of the public, and would not have had to be re-purchased from the companies to whom they had been given. I believe these concessions represent an amount not very short of one-third of the whole existing capital of the companies, and additions are still being made in that direction. Even in the present session of Parliament we have passed the Second Reading of two Bills, which add very considerable additional amounts to the capital of the companies promoting them, and at a later stage of to-day's proceedings we shall be called upon to consider a Bill which proposes to give a very great asset to the companies in the shape of power to draw an almost unlimited supply of water from the river Thames. We have had, in the case of almost every Bill, to contend for the maintenance of what is called a sinking fund. At great expense to the ratepayers of London, we have had to secure the insertion of such a provision in the various Bills. We have also had to get inserted in several of the Bills a clause stating that the concession granted would not in the

event of purchase be liable to be treated as a valuable asset of the company. But both these provisions have been omitted from the Bills we have before us this session, and we stand in jeopardy also of losing the power we already possess to prevent a valuable asset being a charge against us in the event of purchase. The clause providing that a concession granted to a company should not be reckoned as an asset which we were to purchase, was practically first introduced in the Staines Reservoir Bill of 1896, being copied from an older Bill of little importance. How did that clause come to be introduced? In 1896, when our Purchase Bills were rejected, we complained that Bills were being passed giving the companies large concessions, and the President of the Local Government Board met us very fairly, and secured the adoption of an Instruction to the Committee, to the effect that they should not make a greater amount of concession than was necessary for the immediate requirements of the case. When we came to discuss the Staines Reservoir scheme, which gave large additional powers over the Thames to the companies, it was perfectly obvious to the Committee that a portion of a reservoir could not be constructed, and that it would be necessary, if the scheme were passed at all, to pass it as a whole. We adopted this plan to meet the spirit, if not the letter of the right hon. Gentleman's Instruction. We passed the scheme, but we also inserted a clause to the effect that in the event of purchase the concession should not be reckoned as an asset of the companies for which we were to pay. The clause has since been adopted in other Bills. At that time, we anticipated that the question of purchase would be settled in a short time, and, accordingly, we anticipated that the clause would remain in operation for seven years. It will, therefore, cease to exist in 1903, and unless the purchase of the companies' undertakings is carried out before that year, the object and intention of the clause, as well as of the Instruction of the House upon which it was framed, will be frustrated. I wish to point out the extreme importance of this. If the Bill is passed this year it cannot become law till towards the end of the year, and a whole series of arbitrations will have to be completed before the period I have indicated. If you defer it until next year—and in this connection we must not forget the imminence of a General Election—there is great danger that the purchase scheme will be so delayed that humanly speaking it will be impossible to complete the arbitrations in time. This clause would then cease to be operative, and the concessions would become a valuable asset of the companies. Is it not, therefore, our duty to urge the House to pass these Purchase Bills immediately? We are aware of the great loss which must be caused to the ratepayers of London if we do not pass the Purchase Bills in the present session. I am prepared to make concessions under those circumstances. The Government are already in possession of what practically these points amount to. In the Bill, apart from the great governing question of purchase, there have been certain differences of opinion on particular clauses. In the first place there is the clause which suggests that we should be free to separate the water supply in its sources as well as in the bulk to supply the outside areas. That separation was not part of our policy, and it is an endeavour on our part to meet the outside areas. If that is not successful in meeting their views, and if it is the desire of the House that that clause should be modified, we are perfectly prepared to do so. The second is the arbitration clause. We submit that under the circumstances in which we brought in our Bill a few years ago it was necessary to instruct the arbitrator on different points, but much has happened since then. These points have been brought before the Royal Commission and the public, and I am free to say that if we can get our Bill this session, and if purchase can be secured this session, we will be willing to accept an arbitration clause which is not in our opinion as good as we could wish. That is to say, we shall be prepared to accept the arbitration clause shadowed by the Royal Commission on the lines of the Land Clauses Act, with a special arbitration tribunal, and the omission of a solatium for compulsory purchase. That is a distinct endeavour on our part to meet the situation in order to secure purchase this year, but if the Bill is not passed this session then the *quid pro quo* under which we offer these concessions would not be obtainable by and by. Now I come to the question of the authority. I admit at once that the Royal Commission has said that it did not approve of

the London County Council as the authority for management. [Cheers.] That meets with the response which is naturally to be expected from hon. Members on the other side of the House, because it is in accordance with the views which they have quite consistently held. I do not object to their position in the matter at all, but I say that we are perfectly prepared to meet the wishes of the House generally, and of all concerned. So anxious are we to secure purchase this year by some public authority and set the question at rest, that we are prepared to purchase in trust for any authority that may be created, and we will reserve to ourselves no more right in connection with that authority than the right every hon. Member has of dealing with any measure coming before the House. The House will at any rate see that I am dealing frankly with the points at issue. I go further. This Bill was drafted in view of what the Royal Commission might possibly report. We were not aware what it would report, but we had to bear the Report in mind. Let me call the attention of the House to Clause 24, because I do not think that much attention has been paid to it. It states that the Council shall appoint for the management of the water supply a committee which may comprise as members persons not being members of the Council, and that the Council shall delegate absolutely to such committee any power with reference to the management and administration of the water supply. If that managing body be not capable of giving satisfaction to all concerned, then any persons concerned or the Government will be free to introduce a measure to substitute another authority; and as regards such a measure we reserve only the power which every hon. Member possesses in respect of any measure for which the approval of the House is asked. Under Clause 25 of this Bill we actually empower urban councils and urban and rural district councils which may be concerned to introduce a Bill for altering or amending this Act in so far as it relates to the constitution of the authority to manage the water supply of the metropolis, and we also empower these bodies to act if they choose as petitioners against any such Bill, the clause stating, "it being the intention of this Act not to prejudice any such question." It is very difficult, after what I have now said, for any hon. Member to state, as has been stated in the circulars which have been issued, that this Bill is absolutely opposed to every recommendation of the Royal Commission. It is not so. I have shown our willingness and desire to amend the measure, provided we can secure its passage this session. I have shown that, although the County Council would be the purchasing body, another body would afterwards be the managing body. There is nothing in the Report of the Royal Commission against that position of affairs. It was not as a purchasing body that the Royal Commission made any objection to the County Council; it was to it as the body to control the supply after purchase was effected. There is a great point in that, because I am strongly of opinion that whatever body you choose ultimately to create to control and manage the water supply it will have to have recourse in the first instance to the London County Council to effect the purchase. [An HON. MEMBER: Why?] The reason is that, in order to effectually carry through a purchase arbitration and the long negotiations connected with it, you must have some body which thoroughly understands the case. If you create a new body, it will have to spend years in securing for itself the necessary information, and also in securing officers acquainted with the subject to carry through the purchase. We have these officers in the London County Council, and therefore you will delay purchase indefinitely if you create an authority to purchase as well as to manage. There have been great difficulties in the way of creating an authority for managing the water supply of London, but a large portion of these difficulties arose from the water companies themselves, and if these companies were out of the way and satisfied, I believe, although it would be difficult, it would, at any rate, at least be possible to construct an authority capable of managing the London water supply. I have given reasons for the immediate passing of this Bill, and I have indicated the concessions which under these circumstances we should be prepared to make. I hope I have not detained the House too long. The measure is intricate, but is yet framed on such large lines that if they be steadily adhered to it will not be difficult for the House to arrive at a decision. I thank hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House for their patient and

kindly attention. Even the hon. Members who differ from me respect, I hope, my views as I respect their views. In conclusion, I move the Second Reading of the Bill.

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): My hon. friend has made an ingenious and interesting speech, but I think the bulk of his arguments has been directed to support a Bill which is not yet drafted. He has not said much about the London Water Purchase Bill which is now before us, but he said a great deal in favour of a purely hypothetical Bill. What is the real principle of the Bill now before the House? It is that the London County Council should be the purchaser of the water undertakings of the eight London water companies, and that after purchase the Council should remain the owner and work the business within its own area, but that with regard to outside areas the Council should transfer the property and working of the undertakings to different local authorities. That is an inseparable part of the policy which the London County Council has always adopted in connection with these Bills. May I ask the House to recall how during this Parliament the House of Commons has treated Bills dealing with the London water question on these lines? In 1896 the first Bill based on these lines was brought in and was rejected on Second Reading by a majority of 162. In 1897 a similar Bill was introduced and its Second Reading was defeated by a majority of 135. In that year the Government promised that they would appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole question, and in May of that year the Commission was appointed. The London County Council recognised the futility of proceeding with these Bills pending the Report of the Royal Commission, and in 1898 no Bill was introduced. In the summer of 1898 there unfortunately occurred a scarcity of water in the East End of London, and impelled by that fact—I do not complain of its action—the County Council very naturally introduced two Bills dealing with this question—the London Water Purchase Bill and the Welsh Supply Bill. What happened? When the Welsh Supply Bill came on for Second Reading it was met by an Amendment, that the House thought it was undesirable to deal with it until the Royal Commission had reported, and that Amendment was carried by a considerable majority. The London Water Purchase Bill was postponed from time to time, and ultimately withdrawn. The House of Commons, then, has always treated the policy of the London County Council in this way. It has absolutely refused to sanction their main policy of purchase of the water companies' undertakings, and at the same time it has attached great weight to the appointment of a Royal Commission, and had practically declared, that when the Report of the Royal Commission was presented to the House it would attach very commanding weight to its recommendations. Well, the Royal Commission was appointed in 1897. It was composed of men of all views, men of great distinction in many walks of life. Its proceedings were protracted, some said too protracted. The Commission certainly made a very exhaustive inquiry, and ultimately reported at the beginning of this year. Their report was a unanimous report; and I think everybody who has studied it will agree—I know that the leaders of the Progressive party in the London County Council admit it—that the Report is a singularly clear and able document. How does that Report deal with what is, after all, the main principles of the Bill we have got to consider to-day as regards purchase by the London County Council, and subsequent severance? It says—

"Inasmuch, therefore, as all the metropolitan counties except Hertfordshire, are bent on demanding what the London County Council are pledged to concede, we think that a purchase by the London County Council of the water undertakings must necessarily be followed by that severance and division of the works of supply and distribution into five distinct portions, which appears to us open to so much objection as to be practically inadmissible. On this ground, among others, we have come to the conclusion that the London County Council shall not be the purchaser."

On the first and main point of this Bill, therefore, the Royal Commission has clearly and decisively reported against it, as also on the second point in regard to severance. And then the Commission went on to report in favour of the constitution of a definite new authority which should be the purchasing authority, and afterwards the distributing authority.

I think I ought to quote the exact words—

"We think the Water Board shall be a permanent, and not a fluctuating body—consisting of not more than thirty members, selected on account of their business capacity, and, if possible, their knowledge of matters connected with water supply; and so constituted as not to give a preponderance to any of the conflicting interests concerned. We think that the size and importance of the area to be dealt with takes the duties out of the category of purely municipal or local functions, and makes them a matter as much of national as of local concern."

That conclusion of the Royal Commission seems to be absolutely adverse to the contention of the promoters of this Bill—that the London County Council should be in any way the purchasing or the distributing authority outside the area of the London County Council; and therefore it is absolutely conclusive against the Second Reading of this Bill. I gathered from the speech of my hon. friend the Member for Hoxton, that he wishes to come to the House in a spirit of sweet reasonableness and ask the House to give a Second Reading to the Bill, and let it be completely transformed by a Select Committee upstairs. In effect he says, Let the Select Committee eviscerate the Bill, and then reviscerate it; in fact, turn it into a totally different Bill. I do not know whether that is in accordance with the practice of this House. I doubt very much whether a second reading has ever been given to any Bill on the express ground that it is to be essentially and entirely altered in Committee. What security have we that the Select Committee will transform the Bill in the way which my hon. friend desires, or we desire? At any rate, I put it to the House that this is a matter of too great importance to be referred wholly to a Select Committee. The future supply of water to London and the surrounding districts is a matter that ought to be dealt with at the outset by the House itself, and I do not think that in a matter of this kind, so fraught with difficulties, that we ought to trust a Select Committee to transform the Bill in every particular. My hon. friend asks the House to refer this Bill to a Select Committee owing to the extreme urgency of the question. I demur to that. I put it to the House that there can be no question that a year's delay will make no practical difference. As to the sufficiency of water, it will be remembered that last year was the most stringent test of the capacity of the water companies to provide an adequate water supply. Last summer and autumn were the driest we have almost ever had, following, as they did, a succession of dry seasons, and yet happily not a district of London suffered in any degree at all. We must remember that the companies have added largely to their capacity for giving a full supply by means of the communication of one system with another. Therefore, I do not think there is the least danger that next year or the year after there will be a scarcity at all, even if we had a drought. As regards the money question, this is how it occurs to me. Supposing that in the interval, before a settlement is reached, the water companies add to their capital, and that the quinquennial valuation increased their assessment, the purchasing authority would obtain an increased value for the increased price, as the charges on the water rates would also be raised in future. And if the companies increase their storage reservoirs, that increase will be available for the future water authority, and there is therefore no urgent necessity for purchasing this year. Hon. friends here and elsewhere who oppose this Bill have been rather bitterly assailed on the ground that we are delaying the ultimate settlement of this question, that we are more or less interested in the water companies, and are trying to prevent the water consumers from getting that kind of settlement which they ought to have. For myself, I absolutely repudiate the desire to interpose any unnecessary delay in the settlement of this question. The London water question has been too long a matter for politicians, too long has it inflamed the passions of the London County Council; too long has it led to the embarrassment of the water companies; too long has it prevented the water companies from getting the facilities which they ought to have got; and all of us have come to the conclusion that we should have a final settlement. I certainly would have preferred that there should have been an amalgamation of the companies, rather than the creation of a new public authority; but I accept the Report of the Commission. I admit the force of the argument which the Commission bring forward when they say that amalgamation is impossible, and that it is indispensable

in the public interest that there should be only one authority in the future. I waive my private view of the matter, and so do many others; and I am perfectly certain that there is a general inclination in men's minds in London to accept the Report of the Commission. It only remains for the Progressives in the London County Council to imitate us, and to abandon their preconceived views, and join with us all in making the Report of the Royal Commission the basis of a final settlement. The Government appointed that Commission, whose Report has met with an almost unanimity of approval, and I cannot doubt but that the Government will, as soon as practical, give effect to the main recommendations of the Commission. It is with that firm and strong hope that I now beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): In seconding the Amendment of my hon. friend, I need only say a few words, as he has practically exhausted all the arguments that can be advanced. My hon. friend opposite — whose moderation in stating his views contrasts very materially with the tone of some of those who agree with him—has not done us the favour of recognising that though we had consistently always opposed the policy of the London County Council, and disagreed with some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, yet we now feel it to be the duty of all interested in this question to accept the weighty judgment contained in the unanimous Report of the Royal Commission. In the interests of speedy and final settlement of this question, which has been kept open for too great a period, this House would not be justified in sanctioning a Bill which flies in the teeth of every one of the recommendations of one of the strongest Royal Commissions ever appointed.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I desire to recognise fully the very conciliatory tone of hon. Members opposite in the speeches which have just been delivered. I quite agree that this question should be taken altogether out of the domain of party politics, which has been far too long an element in it. In the very few observations which I shall trouble the House with, I shall endeavour, as far as I can, to see how far we are agreed, and to see if, even at this hour, we cannot come to some conclusion which will really help us to arrive at a solution of this difficult question. My hon. friend based his opposition to this Bill not so much upon a question of principle, and my hon. friend behind me has suggested that we should regard the objections made as matters which a Committee upstairs might meet by making alterations. As regards private Bills that is very often done, and in regard to this Bill the Royal Commission did not report until the end of December, and it was essential for the County Council to draft and print the Bills and to give notice of them long before that date. It was, therefore, impossible for the County Council to alter the Bill in the direction indicated by my hon. friend behind me before it came to this House for consideration. Speaking for myself and for my hon. friends behind me, I agree that the County Council are practically prepared generally to accept the view of the Royal Commission, to which allusion has been made, and also to accept the conclusions in general terms to which they have come. They desire that the principle of the Bill—which is purchase—should go upstairs to the Committee, which would then be able to alter it in the direction indicated. May I point out that in this matter, apart from questions of detail, there are really only three matters of primary importance involved in this question. One is the principle of purchase; the second is the basis upon which that purchase can be carried out; and the third is what authority shall be constituted in order to carry out the administration of the water companies of London after purchase. I do not think I need detain the House upon the principle of purchase, for that is a principle to which not only Members on this side of the House, but also many hon. Members on the opposite side, have given their assent, and the principle of purchase is practically accepted on both sides of the House. Therefore, I need not detain the House

by discussing the principle of purchase. It simply means that some public authority should purchase the water companies' undertakings at a fair price. That was the argument used by the right hon. Gentleman in 1897 when I introduced a Water Bill on behalf of the County Council. The chief reason why that measure was thrown out was that the principle of purchase was not altogether agreed to, and the right hon. Gentleman said he wished to have a Royal Commission to consider it. That Commission have now finally decided that question. There was a further question which I think had some effect upon the fortunes of the Bill of 1897—I allude to the difference of opinion as to how the arbitrator should arrive at a fair price. With regard to this matter there was a considerable difference between the proposals of the County Council and those proposed by the water companies. Naturally the companies wanted the best price they could get, and the County Council wanted them at the lowest price. That was only natural, but the real difference of opinion was whether the Lands Clauses Act should be applied in its entirety to the purchase, or whether there should be some Amendment or alteration in regard to the matter. As I understand the Report of the Royal Commission, they have, in terms, accepted the principle of the Lands Clauses Act, but they admit, practically, that the Lands Clauses Act, as commonly carried out, would not enable the arbitrator to give a fair price for these concerns. The Commission decided that the requirements of London ought to be taken into account, and also the fact that the undertakings would be less profitable in the future than in the past. The right hon. Gentleman accepted the clause proposed by the County Council in regard to this matter, in which they suggested that everything should be taken into account either to the advantage or the disadvantage of either party. The Commission have come to the conclusion that some special tribunal will have to be created in order to deal with this large question, and that the Lands Clauses Act will have to be applied under special conditions and limitations. I think that question, which divided us so very much a year or two ago, has now been practically settled. The third point to which the Member for Chelsea took exception is the question as to who should be the purchasing authority. He said the Commission had distinctly recommended that the London County Council should not be the purchasing authority. That is not the conclusion which I have come to in reading the Report of the Commission. It is true that the Commission say that they do not think the County Council ought to be the purchasing body, but they mean the administrative authority where they mention the County Council. Practically the argument is that the County Council ought not to be the purchasing authority, because they are in favour of severance and of going to Wales for a water supply for London. Those are the two principal reasons they give against the County Council being the purchasing authority. Their objections, therefore, are not really in connection with the actual matter of purchase itself, but as to the authority after purchase is completed, and I do not find anywhere in the Report any disposition on the part of the Commissioners objecting to the County Council merely as the purchasing authority. I think my hon. friend satisfied the House that the County Council were not at all unreasonable in this matter. Anticipating to a certain extent the Report of the Royal Commission, the County Council inserted clauses which would enable not only the Committee upstairs so to alter the Bill as to create a fresh authority, but also to enable the Committee so to limit the authority of the County Council as to prevent them becoming the administering body apart from the purchasing body, and while enabling them to purchase, to prevent the County Council actually administering the concerns. This would practically leave in the hands of the Government and the House the fullest and freest possible liberty to deal with this question of authority at some future time if they so desired. The County Council for the time being would be merely the agent for any authority which might be subsequently introduced. It is because of this limitation, and because they do not commit the House to the County Council as the authority in the future, that I for one supported the Bill on the first occasion. I support the Bill, because I think the facts alluded to in regard to the matter of urgency are of very extreme importance indeed. My hon. friend the Member for Chelsea said he did not wish to delay the Bill or the settling of this

matter, but a year's delay at the present moment in regard to purchase may involve several years delay in bringing the matter to a definite conclusion. The Royal Commission themselves say that these large questions of future expenditure which must be undertaken ought not to be undertaken by these companies as private bodies, and this means that they should be undertaken by some authority after purchase has been completed. In regard to this expenditure the Report of the Commission says there ought not to be any undue delay in undertaking the great works contemplated. My hon. friend alluded to the Sterilisation Clause, which is a matter of very considerable importance. He pointed out that in the Staines Reservoir Act and other Acts there are clauses which provide that the expenditure authorised by this House shall not go to the pecuniary advantage in case of purchase of the existing company, and when that proviso comes to an end in 1903, it is quite clear that that clause will disappear and the ratepayers will have to pay an enhanced price for the undertaking. The Bill ought to come into force at an early date, more especially because the quinquennial valuation next year will add very largely to the capital value of the companies' undertakings. It is perfectly true that the purchasing authority will get the increased income, and that increase in the value of the water companies will increase the capital sum which will have to be paid for them. I can only say, in conclusion, that the very conciliatory speeches of hon. Members opposite will, I think, assist the County Council in arriving at a fair basis of purchase, and the speech of the hon. Member for Chelsea has given me some hope that the Government may see their way to accept this Bill. I am very interested to know what the attitude of the Government will be with regard to this matter. They have now been in office for five years, and the right hon. Gentleman and the Government have given repeated pledges, both at the last election and since, that they would deal with this matter, but they have done absolutely nothing towards arriving at a solution of this question. They introduced a Bill in 1896 which was withdrawn, and in 1897 they introduced and passed a Bill which the Commission themselves say was perfectly futile either to the consumers or anybody else. Last year they introduced a Bill to enable a slight amount of water to be acquired by one company from another, and that is a Bill which has been shown to be practically futile, because the companies interested have been compelled this year to come down to the House for further powers to deal with this matter. Certainly, when the right hon. Gentleman appointed the Commission, over three years ago, his argument was that in the condition of affairs then he could not do anything. Now he is in possession of a Report in favour of purchase, in favour of a public authority, and in favour of a fair price being given, subject to the general principles of the Land Clauses Act. These are matters on which, in the past, we have had disputes, but there is now no real matter of dispute between us in principle. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman may, even at the eleventh hour, deal with this grave and most difficult question, and do something to redeem the pledges given to us.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I wish to acknowledge the extremely conciliatory spirit in which the hon. Member for Hoxton addressed himself to this question, and the way in which it was reciprocated by my hon. friend behind me. In fact, I think, the only discordant note has been in the closing observations of the hon. Member who has just sat down. The hon. Member taunted the Government that they had been in office now four years—[AN HON. MEMBER: Five years.]—and had done literally nothing in regard to this question. The hon. Member is apparently entirely ignorant of the fact that, owing to the Bill which was passed by the Government last year, and the operations which were rendered possible under that Bill—a Bill, moreover, which was recommended—I may say, brought in at the request of the Local Government Board—we were successful at all events in dealing with this question, and in preventing what unquestionably would have been over a portion of London the worst of all the water famines that has up to the present time been experienced. I must say that the House is placed in a somewhat peculiar position, because, as I think I shall be able to show, in spite of the speech of the hon. Member for Hoxton, we are asked to read a second time to-night a Bill which un-

doubtedly is directly in conflict with the recommendations of the Royal Commission which was expressly appointed to inquire into all the subjects to which it relates. I cannot help thinking that the House of Commons will require more cogent and more convincing reasons than any which have been submitted to it at the present time before they adopt a course which, to say the least of it, would be extremely unusual. Now what are the grounds on which we are asked to-night to take this very unusual course? They are mainly two—the merits of the Bill which is now before us, or, rather, I should say of the Bills, for there is another Bill on the Paper, and which embrace the whole policy of the London County Council with regard to the London water question, and the second ground is this—and the hon. Gentleman laid great stress upon this—the necessity for immediate legislation—a necessity which he said was so urgent that it could not be postponed without injury to the consumers and the ratepayers of London. In regard to the first ground, I do not think we are called upon to argue that question at any length to-night, and it will probably be sufficient to say that this Bill which we are asked to read a second time is directly at variance with the main recommendations of the Royal Commission which I have referred to. That Commission, as the House is well aware, sat for, I think, two years and a half, took an immense amount of evidence, and it has quite recently reported. I am glad to hear from all the comments that have been made with regard to the Report of that Commission that everybody seems to recognise that it is a most complete and exhaustive Report on the whole London water question, and all the questions connected with it. I can only say for my own part that I think the public are much indebted to both Lord Llandaff and his colleagues for the great attention they gave to this matter. I would say in regard to this Commission that in some of their most important conclusions they confirm the findings of another Commission which sat upon this question some years ago, and which was presided over by Lord Balfour, and notably in respect to the sufficiency of the present sources of supply, both as regards quantity and quality, provided that adequate storage is provided. I think that is a very significant circumstance, and it adds to the value and to the weight of this Report when everybody seems to agree. Moreover, and this is not always the case with Royal Commissions, it makes some very definite and some very precise recommendations. Some of them have been alluded to already by my hon. friend behind me. Perhaps the House will allow me as briefly as I can to summarise what are the chief recommendations of this Report. They recommend, first, that the undertakings of the London water companies should be acquired by a Government authority. It is quite true that the County Council of London are in concurrence, and I think there will be general agreement with regard to this part of the question; but, secondly, when they come to the question of who should be the purchaser, they say very explicitly that it ought not to be the County Council for a variety of reasons, on one or two of which I shall have a word to say directly. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down pointed out that although they made the recommendation that the County Council was not to be the purchaser, there was no reason why it should not ultimately be the authority, I think he said.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It was the other way. I simply said that I understood the Commission to object to the County Council being the future administering authority, but I said that there was nothing in the Report to show that the County Council should not be the purchasing authority and afterwards hand over the control to another.

MR. CHAPLIN: Upon that point the hon. Member will find that the Royal Commission drew no distinction between the purchaser and the authority that was to administer the water supply. On the question of the authority they say most distinctly, "We think the Water Board should be a permanent and not a fluctuating body." Not only is it to be a non-fluctuating body, but it is to be selected on the grounds of capacity for business, and general knowledge of the subject, and they also recommend that the County Council should be very largely represented upon it. Thirdly, they maintain that the present sources of supply in the valleys of the Thames and the Lee are sufficient in quantity and quality, and with adequate storage will

continue to be so until the year 1941, even supposing the population continues to grow at the present rate of increase Fourthly, they say that to embark at the present moment on bringing water from Wales would be to throw an unnecessary burden on the present and next generation of water-rate payers and their immediate successors, their reason for saying so being that the cost of providing a supply from Wales would be immeasurably greater than the cost of providing an adequate water supply in other ways. There are many other recommendations, but these are among the chief of them, and they are quite sufficient, I think, for our discussion to-night. There are two Bills before us to-night. One is a Bill for the purchase of the undertakings by the London County Council. The other is a Bill to enable the County Council to bring water to London from Wales, and it appears to me perfectly obvious that to accept these Bills we should be flying directly in the teeth of the recommendations of the Commission. On the other hand, the purchase of the undertakings by the London County Council would seem to everyone, at first sight, to be so natural and so reasonable a course that I desire, with the permission of the House, to say one word with regard to the chief reasons given against that proposition. The fact is that the difficulty in this case, and I believe it has always been so, is with what are known as the outside areas. I desire to press this upon the House as having an important bearing on this part of the Bill. It is in these outside areas that the great increase of population is to be looked forward to in the future. It is of enormous importance that there should be a greatly increased water supply in those outside areas, seeing that the population is growing, and will continue to grow until, according to the estimates which have been made, it will be as large as the population of London itself within the period named by this Commission, namely, the next forty years. It is from these outside areas that the most irreconcilable opposition comes to allowing the control of their water supply to be in the hands of the London County Council. No one has recognised this more than the County Council itself, so much so that they have pledged themselves to make arrangements to hand over to those outside areas the control of their own water supply. If this proposition were permissible there would have been no possible objection, in my opinion, to the London County Council being the water authority for London, but unfortunately the pledges given by the London County Council turned out to be altogether impracticable. Many authorities on this subject always maintained that that would be the case, and therefore for this precise reason the question of severance was submitted to the judgment of the Royal Commission. They reported in words which I should like to read to the House. They are in paragraph 137. It is only a short statement, and I wish to draw public attention to it—

"The conclusion we arrive at on this subject is that although severance of the works and sources of supply of the several companies, and the division thereof between the councils of the six counties within the limits of supply, are not actually impracticable, they would be very difficult and highly undesirable. They will involve needless waste and expense, and can only be carried out with constant friction in working details, and at a greatly increased cost of management. All the advantages and economies of concentration and amalgamation will be sacrificed; it will become increasingly difficult to deal with future wants; and no compensating advantage will be secured."

That being so, the County Council, recognising that that is the situation, now come forward with another proposal, which has been mentioned by the hon. Member to-night, and which, from the speech of the hon. Member, from a deputation which did me the honour to wait upon me, and from circulars which have been sent to Members of the House, I understand to be this: Their Bill for purchase is now to be allowed to go forward. That Bill is to contain a clause enabling—according to the circular or according to the deputation—a Bill to be introduced for legislation, either during next session or the session after, to constitute the authority; or, as the hon. Member said, the County Council is prepared to purchase on trust. With regard to that proposal, I have to say that it is one thing to bring in a Bill, and it is another thing to be able to pass it. Suppose anything occurred to prevent the passing of that Bill in the next or the succeeding session of Parliament, what would be the position? A great many things may happen before then. Suppose the constitution of the new authority proposed by the Bill should be strongly opposed in this House, what would be the position then?

The County Council would be in possession; they would be *de facto* the water authority; and we in effect to-night should have agreed to the very thing to which the Royal Commission have so strongly objected. We should have made the County Council the authority not only for London itself, but also for all the outside areas, to which course, as I have already pointed out, those outside authorities are irreconcilably opposed. I cannot believe that this is an arrangement to which the House of Commons either will or ought to consent. Nor can I say that there is anything in the plea of urgency, which the hon. Member has put forward. What did the hon. Member say upon that point? That any further delay would be injurious, especially on financial grounds. He spoke of certain clauses, the insertion of which he and his friends had promoted in recent Bills which had been submitted to Parliament, by which concessions were not to have the effect of giving further assets to the company. But there is nothing to prevent similar clauses being inserted in any Bill which may come before Parliament before this question is finally settled.

MR. STUART: To extend the operation of the present clauses would require a Government measure.

MR. CHAPLIN: I do not think a Government measure would be necessary. The hon. Gentleman asked me a question across the floor of the House the other day* when he advocated this matter, as to what were my views upon that subject, and he advocated at the same time the insertion of clauses relating to the Sinking Fund. I told him in reply that I thought there was a great deal in the proposition which he had made. Since then, I may tell him, in making a report to the Committee—which is part of the duty of the Local Government Board—with regard to one of the Bills which are now before the Committee upstairs, we have suggested that the Sinking Fund Clauses should be introduced.

MR. STUART: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for putting that right, but the point of my argument was that the existing clause in the Staines Reservoir Act ran out in 1903.

MR. CHAPLIN: I will deal with that in a moment; I cannot deal with all the questions at once. I will take that next. The hon. Gentleman is greatly afraid that the clauses in some of the existing Acts of Parliament will expire before the necessary measures are passed. I am aware of only three such measures. There is the Staines Reservoir Act, which expires, it is true, in 1903, but not until the month of August, 1903, or nearly four years from the present time; and if this question cannot be settled within the next four years, in my humble opinion it is not likely to be settled at all. There are two other Acts, one of which expires in 1908, and the other of which expires in 1906, that being the Act passed by the Government in 1899. Surely these are limits of time within which we should be perfectly safe, even if we postponed dealing with this question until after the present session. On the other hand, there is one other question to which I wish to refer—though it was not mentioned by the hon. Member, but it was referred to in various publications—namely, the effect of the next quinquennial valuation. It was contended before the Royal Commission that the effect of the next quinquennial valuation would be to raise the value of the undertakings of the water companies by no less a sum than £218,000 a year. In reply to that, I have to say that, although no doubt there is an increase in some cases, there is a decrease in others. That is the first thing to recollect. The second point is that in the case of railway and other large companies, which form a very large element indeed in the rateable value, the water is taken by meter; these companies do not pay according to rateable value, and therefore in those cases the water companies gain absolutely nothing. In fact, it was shown at the Royal Commission that six of the eight existing water companies would, on the balance, lose rather than gain by the next quinquennial valuation. That is the verdict of the Commission with regard to six of the companies. With regard to the remaining two companies, I have myself made inquiries since the Report of the Commission was published, and my information shows the same result certainly in one case, and, as far as my memory goes, in both. This fact is

* See discussion on Second Reading of the East London Water Bill, 13th March, 1900. (*The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], vol. lxxx., page 719.)

summed up in two short paragraphs of the Report with which I will not trouble the House. There is, I admit, one question of great urgency, but it was not referred to by the hon. Gentleman or any of the speakers on that side of the House, and that is the necessity for further storage in the valley of the Thames. That, I consider, having given great attention to this subject, is, at the present moment, beyond all others the most important and most urgent question in connection with the water supply of London. But that question is not necessarily affected by the postponement of these Bills. There are two Bills at this moment before Parliament for greatly increasing the necessary storage for London; one is the Bill of the East London Water Company, providing for additional storage to the extent of 5,500,000,000 gallons, and the other is the Bill of the Lambeth Company providing for 1,000,000,000 gallons. A similar Bill was introduced last year on behalf of the East London Company, which safely passed the Committee upstairs and went through this House. To my great regret, owing to the exertions of the London County Council, that Bill was rejected by the House of Lords. It is not my business to criticise the proceedings of any Committee of either House of Parliament. I would only say that I personally, having some knowledge of the subject, should have been very very sorry to take upon myself the great responsibility of rejecting that measure. There was another question raised by the supporters of the policy of the London County Council, with which also I have very great sympathy, namely, the desirability of being early in the field in Wales in order to secure the reversion of a water-shed for all and any possible requirements of London in a more or less distant future. That I think is a proposal well deserving of most careful consideration. But provision may easily be made for that in any legislation which is thought to be necessary or desirable on this subject, and it certainly is not one of any immediate urgency for the present session. It really seems to me that there is very little to be urged on the ground of urgency, or on those grounds which the hon. Member has put before us to-night. As to the changes foreshadowed by the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, to which he would agree in the passage of this Bill through Committee, I must say that they would so greatly transform the present measure that it is too big a question to be dealt with and settled in that way. I have come to the conclusion, in spite of the appeal made to me by the hon. Member, that under the circumstances there is nothing to warrant us in taking a course which would be so extremely unusual. I venture to think it would be contrary to all precedent and very ill-advised on our part to sanction the progress of these Bills now. I desire fully to acknowledge the very conciliatory spirit shown on behalf of the London County Council by the hon. Member to-night. We recognise thoroughly the importance of this question, and when the time comes for it to be the duty of the Government again to consider this matter I can assure the hon. Member we shall most gladly reciprocate the conciliatory spirit which he has shown.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Why not now?

MR. CHAPLIN: The conditions under which purchase should be effected, the tribunal to which the question should be referred, the constitution of the new authority, and many other questions of importance of that kind, will always have to be considered. I hope that the objections which have been raised to-night will not be considered insuperable, and for my part I am sanguine that it will be possible to devise a scheme to meet difficulties, and which will permit this question of the water supply of London to be finally and satisfactorily settled. If I may make a suggestion towards this end it is that hon. Members should now allow this discussion to conclude without taking a division.

*MR. MELLOR (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): Before this discussion closes I wish to refer to the two Commissioners who, unhappily, died between the time when the evidence closed and the signing of the Report. Both were great authorities on the water question. One of them was my learned friend Mr. Cripps, a gentleman well acquainted with water legislation and Bills of this kind; and the other gentleman was General de Courcy Scott, the water examiner for London, an accomplished and able man, who was a very great assistance in all the discussions.

After the repeated discussions I have had with both these gentlemen I am in the position to say that had they lived to the time when it became our duty to sign the Report, I have no doubt that they would have agreed with us, and their signatures would have added considerable weight to it.

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Representing as I do a riparian constituency, and being a member of the London County Council, I venture, for the first time since I have been a Member of this House, to intervene in a water companies debate; and in so doing I have to remind the House that to-day, not for the first nor the twentieth, and certainly not for the last time the House has a London Water Bill before it for consideration. I am sincerely sorry that the President of the Local Government Board, who ought to have grasped this subject in a more statesmanlike way, has not risen to the height of his duty and the level of his responsibility to the water consumers of London. It is necessary in affirming my opinion for that statement that I should traverse one or two of the remarks made by the President of the Local Government Board. In his attempts to answer the hon. Member for Poplar, he seems to have given away the whole case for the water companies. What did he say? When the hon. Member for Poplar justly twitted him with doing nothing to solve the water question, the right hon. Gentleman replied that but for what the Government had done London would have been face to face with a water famine in the East of London. What does that mean? It means that the only thing you have done has been to compel the eight water companies to link up their mains, and you had to bring great public pressure to bear upon them to do it. But you have not compelled them to increase the supply of water flowing through those mains. You have improved the method of distribution, but the total volume of water distributed has not been increased by a single gallon, and if that is the only thing you can do for the water consumers of London, then all I can say is that they have very little indeed to thank the Government for. The right hon. Gentleman says this Bill is opposed to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I want to know how much this Bill is opposed to those recommendations, and to find that out I have only to quote the list of recommendations which the right hon. Gentleman himself read out; and what are they? He said that this Commission which sat for such a great length of time, and took so much evidence with so much ability, made certain recommendations. I never had much opinion of Commissions on anything, and I am glad to say that I hold that view in company with Lord Salisbury, for whose opinion on this point I have a sincere respect. But what does this Commission recommend? They recommend that the *régime* of the water companies should disappear, and that there should be a public authority. That is what this Royal Commission recommended, but the London County Council has been demanding that for the last ten or eleven years, and will continue to demand it until Parliament, in the interests of the people of London and against the narrow interests of water directors and water companies, complies with that request. Then this blessed Royal Commission—and it has been blessed by the President of the Local Government Board, and I wish he had done the other thing—not only recommended that a public authority should manage the water supply of London, but also that purchase should be resorted to. The London County Council has presented Bills for eight or nine years past in favour of purchase, but the right hon. Gentleman says the London County Council is not the proper body. He argues that it is not a permanent body, and I may add neither is Parliament, and neither are the 800 town and county councils in Great Britain and Ireland, which already own their own water supply, and who invariably exercise their duties with economy, efficiency, and with purity of administration. What the London Members ask for is that the public authority recommended by the Royal Commission should be the London County Council; that it should purchase the water companies, and that being agreed upon the undertaking should then be managed by the elected representative body of London. We only ask to be allowed to carry out and administer what these 800 local authorities are now doing. We are told that we want a water board. If the right hon. Gentleman requires any experience of water boards, let him go to the water trust in New York.

If he wants to know how water boards work, let him go through the States of America, and he will find that where trusts manage the water supply, there jobbery is prevalent, there the water is dearest, and there the supply gives the least satisfaction to the people for whom it is administered. If he comes to Great Britain and Ireland he will find that in such places as Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham, where the water authority is the elected representative body and is therefore a fluctuating and not a permanent body, there he will find that they manage and administer their water supply with great ability and efficiency. I come now to another point of the right hon. Gentleman's contention. He said that the Commission reported that the Thames and the Lea were sufficient for all future purposes. He will pardon me if I differ from him and the Commission in that respect. I see a New River Company shareholder smiling. Who would not smile with an "Adventurers" share? I will remind the House what the New River Company did in 1892. In that year they came to the House of Commons and told us that they had within their catchment area sufficient water for all purposes for forty years ahead. But in 1896 they told this House that they had made a mistake, and only four years after that came to the House of Commons asking for Bills to enable them to undo the misstatement they made in 1892, and they asked for power to provided for the deficiency which they said would never arise within forty years. The right hon. Gentleman says that storage ought to be undertaken and that it was a vital matter. On this point I am glad to say the House of Lords and the London County Council agree, and that is most satisfactory. First of all, it proves the moderation of the London County Council's demand. You never find the House of Lords in favour of confiscation, and the fact that they agree with the London County Council indicates the extreme moderation of the Council's terms, and above all it represents and indicates that the House of Lords sometimes does its duty to the public, when free from the high pressure of water company directors, and can do its duty without that pressure which has been too frequently exercised on public opinion inside and outside of this House by those interested in water companies. With regard to the outside areas it is a most significant fact that the only hon. Members who cheered the right hon. Gentleman's remarks are either water company directors or those who have always opposed the idea of the London County Council having the water supply. I have not heard any hon. Members from Bedford, Hertford, Middlesex, or Wales get up and oppose the County Council's terms of purchase, and I do not believe they will oppose seriously the Welsh scheme. But if they do oppose, it will be opposition of a Committee stage character, and it will not be directed against the vital principles of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman goes on to say that this Bill, in its details, is impracticable. Does he mean to say that English engineers are incapable of grappling with physical difficulties and with natural obstacles to a Metropolitan water supply? We can irrigate India by Government officials, and we can ensure the prosperity and success of the Egyptian people by great engineering plans; we can send engineers to overcome great difficulties in foreign countries, and we are asked to believe that, although these difficulties can be overcome everywhere else, they cannot be got over in the River Thames or the water-shed of the outside area. All these suggestions of impracticability would disappear if we were to give the water companies the Lands Clauses terms, which means £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 more than that which they are fairly entitled to receive. When the right hon. Gentleman says that the existing water companies can provide for the future by large storage reservoirs, let me point out that even this Royal Commission said that the provision of storage was not a matter that one company could do, or even that eight companies effectually combined could do, but it was a matter to be undertaken by a public authority which would alone be able to grapple effectively with the storage question. The right hon. Gentleman would also find such a public authority confronted with the question as to whether the people would allow those ugly Staines reservoirs to be repeated mile after mile down the beautiful Thames valley. If that public authority were confronted with the task of havi make fourteen or fifteen m thirty feet high reservoirs

Mr. John Burns.

ames and Lea valley, I think the pense would be very heavy, and uld be nearly as much as the cost going to Wales for a fresh supply. ich a public authority would be driven the last resource, on the ground of onomy, to absorb land from the outside reas which is wanted for building purposes, and upon which the people do not want ugly reservoirs erected, which would e not only a danger to the immediate ocality, but would be a positive source of arm to the residents who live in the eighbourhood of those reservoirs. I ave ventured to deal with one or two oints raised by the right hon. Gentleman, but I claim this opportunity to say a few words upon the broad and the general question of municipal purchase, and upon this point I do earnestly appeal to provincial Members on both sides of the House. I would appeal to hon. Members representing the large cities of the Kingdom, which in the main have Conservative representation. Why should you deny to London that which you grant to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, and Birmingham? Beyond prejudice against the London County Council there is no defence for opposing this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman suggests that you must wait until this Trust or Board, composed of capable men, is appointed. On the point of capability the right hon. Gentleman will not insist, because it would be contradictory to his previous statements if he were to say that the London County Council for this purpose is not as efficient, capable, and honest as any other county council in Great Britain. He has frequently admired their system of accounts and their finance; yea, he has said at the Table of this House that the system of accounts of the London County Council is probably the best of any municipal authority in the kingdom. So much for efficiency. From the point of view of technical capability, I venture to say there are not a dozen water company directors in this House who are equal in ability, capacity, and disinterestedness to the first five County Councillors you would meet in Spring Gardens. So much for honesty. What is more—are these gentlemen elected fortheir knowledge of boring, or of stratification, or of bacteriological analyses of water? Not a bit of it. They are elected for other and higher virtues than are found in a chemical laboratory. When we are told that a Board will be more capable, permit me to say that I do not believe it. Until the County Council has been proved—as it cannot be proved—to be either incapable, dishonest, or to have a desire to be unjust to the outlying authorities, there is no reason why it should not exercise the functions which every corporate council in the kingdom has hitherto exercised. But let me refer for a moment to the way in which evidence is accumulating in favour of the County Council having this control. In 1880 Lord Cross introduced a Bill which I regret was not accepted at that time. [Hear, hear.] Ah! but that was not the fault of the London County Council; it was because Parliament, not for the first time, showed its lack of knowledge of what only a local authority is able to do better. Since 1880 we have had Commission and Committee, the one after the other, and we end up by purchase by an authority—a body to be not the County Council, but a Water Board, to take over the affairs of the company. I venture to say that this delay cannot last much longer. It is not only the potable water of which we desire to get hold. Look at the water supply of London from any point of view. Take the river Thames. The river will not much longer stand the depletion of its stream by the increased quantities which the water companies are yearly taking from it.

SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) was understood to dissent.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: Does the hon. Member the Chairman of the Thames Conservancy doubt that? If so, I shall quote paragraph 100, which is a flat contradiction by the Engineer of the Thames Conservancy of the hon. Member's interruption.

SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND: I certainly deny it. I say that except at a certain period of the year, in the autumn, when the flow is apt to be smaller, there is an enormous quantity of water, something like 1,200,000,000 gallons, passing over Teddington Weir—an amount sufficient for storage and for every other purpose necessary.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: Does not the hon. Member see how he has confirmed

my statement? What does he tell the House? That except in July and August, when we ought to have more water than at any other time of the year—that except in the summer time, when droughts prevail—the river Thames has quite enough water for the people of London. That is about as good as telling a London street-boy to go to St. Petersburg in the winter time to eat ice-cream.

SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND: I am sure the hon. Gentleman would not desire to misrepresent me. What I said was that there was sufficient for storage, and it naturally follows that the storage with which the hon. Member finds so much fault is the very system which will allow an ample supply during those months when the river is low without any detriment to the Thames or to its navigation.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: That was said in 1893, 1894, 1895, and 1896, but recurring water famines have proved that the statement was unfounded, and if the hon. Member will take a plébiscite of the pleasure-going traffic from Molesley Lock to Teddington Weir he will find that both the lock-keepers and the pleasure-passenger public share the view which I hold—that on the grounds of trade, pleasure, health, and sanitation the settlement of this question can no longer be delayed. We are told that storage will settle it. When are you going to get your water? You can get it only at flood time. What is the experience of the chemist at flood time? That at the particular moment the water is charged with more micro-organisms than at any other time. You are going to get the water to store from a district the residential population of which is increasing—a district which has sewage farms upon it, the effluent from which and the water from manured lands has to go into the river Thames. This is the water, part of which you are to store for weeks and months, and part of which you are to filter at Hampton and Molesey. But let me deal with another point. I appeal to commercial men. Go to the wharfingers and the lightermen, to the something like 10,000 men employed in the barges and lighters on the river Thames, and they will tell you that in consequence of the increased width, depth, and tonnage of barges, they are frequently compelled, owing to the lack of water, to do on two tides what formerly they did on one. No suggestion of a lock at Wandsworth or Richmond or lower down will solve this difficulty. I think the hon. Member will admit that one of the greatest mistakes ever made on the river Thames was the building of the Kew and Richmond Lock. Why was it done? Because the pleasure traffic above Richmond could not get water enough even for their rowing boats. Is this big waterway to depend for its trade and its pleasure upon such trumpery and useless expedients as a lock at Richmond and another at Battersea or Wandsworth? All these temporary expedients prove how heavy is the drain of the water companies from the river Thames. There are one or two other points upon which I will touch only briefly. Why do the water companies' directors oppose the Council? It is only on the terms of purchase. That is a matter for neither the water companies' directors nor the County Council. It is a matter for a Committee of this House. It is a matter for a tribunal which should go into the details of finance and repayment, and all the circumstances of the case, and do justice to the outside authorities in a way which is in keeping with the traditions of our Parliamentary Committees. I believe that this House of Commons will go on dabbling with this water question until we have an epidemic not only in the East, but in the West End of London. I believe that as the House passed a garrotting Bill only when one of its Members was garrotted at the bottom of the Duke of York's steps, so it will be driven to pass a Bill to municipalise London water only when continued droughts have been succeeded by several epidemics. I do not believe the House will move even then until the epidemic happens to be in the West End of London, and the West End people with their influence and ability are able to exercise that pressure upon Parliament and the water companies which they know so well how to exert. My view is that prevention is better than cure. I want to prevent an epidemic by going to a Welsh lake, by getting water from cloudland instead of from a sewage-polluted area. I want to be fair and just to the water companies, and I am prepared to trust a House of Commons Committee to be the

arbiter as between the County Council and the water companies shareholders. I want to protect the diminishing trade of the river Thames, where tidal water alone is responsible for carrying on that trade. I want to make the river Thames more and more the silent highway of this great city, on which pleasure will be more frequent and profitable than it now is. In asking for these things I am asking only for that, the carrying out of which London ratepayers at four successive elections have demanded. Who is the authority to determine this? With all respect to this assembly, Parliament is not the authority to determine whether this should be company or municipal enterprise. The authority to decide that are the five millions of water consumers outside. What have they done? At Chelsea, and elsewhere, which in this House is represented by a Conservative who opposes these water Bills, two Progressives were returned at the last County Council election in favour of the municipal water policy. All over London councillors have been elected to support these or similar Bills. For four successive elections the London ratepayers by overwhelming majorities have decided in favour of municipal water—water from Wales, and the purchase of the undertakings of the companies. I appeal to Members of Parliament from provincial districts to respect the mandate of the municipal electors of London. I ask the House to brush aside the paltry and fatuous arguments which have been adduced against this Bill, and to release the city of London once and for all from the toils of the water company directors, who too long have extracted a million of money per annum out of the water consumers of this city, and who in doing so have imposed upon the poor of the East End of London endless misery and inconvenience, have brought this big city several times within easy distance of a water famine, and by their policy of living from hand to mouth, as Parliament may decree, they have caused the future water supply of London to be fraught with great danger to the health and trade and pleasure of this vast city. It is for these reasons I ask the House of Commons to reject both the speech and the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, and to place this city side by side with Glasgow and other places by putting a municipal water supply in the hands of London's elected representatives.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): Before we go to a division I should like to remind the House of what is the real question we have to decide. The question is not whether the London County Council is to administer the water supply of London, but whether we are to-day to make a beginning with the execution of the policy of purchase recommended by the Royal Commission. I do not apologise for rising for a moment to take part in this discussion. It has been left too much in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman, and the happy—or shall I call it the unhappy—family of London representatives. There are those of us who by the exigencies of public business are brought from very remote parts of the country, and compelled to live for a longer period of the year in London than we should otherwise desire, and I am never able to take the view that the question of the London water supply is a question to be discussed on the footing of being a mere private Bill question. How do we stand to-day? A Royal Commission of great ability sat for sixteen months, presided over by Lord Llandaff, who, by his traditions, is certainly not a person who would be likely to lean too much in favour of the views of the London County Council. What that Commission had to decide was between two policies: one was that of the London County Council becoming the purchasers and administrators of the water supply of London, and the other was the question of whether the contention of the water companies should be accepted and nothing done except on minor matters. What did that Commission decide? It decided, and decided most emphatically, in favour of purchase, and that nothing short of purchase would be of any use. It is quite true that the Commission went on to say that they did not recommend that the London County Council should be the purchasing authority, but why did they do that? If you look at paragraph 146 and the other paragraphs in which they discuss the matter, it is perfectly plain that they said that because they contemplated that if the London County Council became the purchasing authority it would also become the administrative authority. That is a much larger question, and one which is not raised by my hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of this Bill. My hon. friend was able to point to this, and it was recognised by the

right hon. Gentleman opposite, that what the London County Council are now asking for—not only through the mouth of my hon. friend, or through the deputation which waited upon the Government, but also through what they propose in the 25th Clause of this Bill—is that the Government should to-day make a beginning with the carrying out of the policy of purchase, leaving for the future the settlement of the question of who is to be the administrative authority. That is quite clear if you read the 25th Clause of the Bill, and it is put beyond doubt by the undertakings which have been given. What reasons are there why they should proceed? To my mind there is one very cogent reason. Whenever this policy of purchase is initiated it must take some years to carry out. Of all the undertakings on which Parliament has allowed private promoters to embark there is nothing at all comparable in magnitude with the proposal for which this Bill asks sanction. The policy of purchasing the undertakings of the Water Companies must necessarily take a very long time, by the very necessities of the situation, as proper inquiry will have to be made to see that people are paid what is justly due to them, and there will be a multitude of complicated interests to unravel. If that be so, surely the attitude of the Government is most unsatisfactory. They brought in, it is true, two or three years ago a Bill for constituting a central authority, but without any purchasing powers, if I recollect rightly. They did not, however, press that Bill; they did not appear to be in earnest about it. I listened most attentively to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman this afternoon, and I confess that if I were a London representative I should not be at all inclined to adopt that conciliatory spirit which the right hon. Gentleman commended. I found nothing in that speech which gave any promise that the Government were in earnest about giving effect to the policy of the very Royal Commission which the right hon. Gentleman so plentifully praised. Not one word appeared in the Queen's Speech, and not one word appeared in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which would lead us to believe that the Government itself intends to take the initiative in this policy of purchase. I will not detain the House by giving reasons why that policy should be adopted; sufficient reasons have already been brought forward. But I do press upon the House the view that by assenting to the Second Reading of this Bill we may begin the carrying out of the policy of purchase which the Royal Commission have recommended, of which the Government itself is in favour, and which, although hon. Members opposite do not expressly commit themselves to, they have carefully abstained from opposing. This step will not have for its necessary consequence administration by this or that or some other authority, but will simply be this and nothing more—a beginning in earnest of the carrying out of the policy of purchase on which we all profess to be agreed.

*SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I do not intend to delay the House by going into the details of the Bill, but as a Member for an East London constituency I feel bound to say a word on behalf of my constituents in support of this measure. East London contains about one-fourth of the inhabitants of this great city, and, therefore, about one-fourth of the water consumers of London, and no class in London have suffered more by the management or the mismanagement of the water companies than the working people and the very poor in Whitechapel. It is immaterial whether the deficiency in the water supply which occurred a year or two ago arose from the heat of summer or the frost of winter, or whether in all seasons it arose from defective pipes or the absence of cisterns. The poor always suffer. I rose especially to point out the urgency of purchasing these undertakings, or of altering the present condition of things, for the reason that in my constituency and the adjoining constituencies the house rents have been raised to double and treble their former amount, and, therefore, on the new assessment next year the water rate will be of necessity increased at the same rate. The companies will have no mercy, because, as they are looking forward to their interest being purchased, they will naturally drive the rating power they possess to its fullest extent.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Epping, Essex) pointed out that the quinquennial assessment did not raise the water rates.

*SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU: If the house-rent has been raised, the assessment, of course, will also be raised.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: But the companies do not raise the price of the water.

*SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU: They charge a percentage on the rent, and naturally, therefore, if the rent is raised the assessment for water rate is also raised in proportion. I beg the hon. Member's pardon, but I am quite certain I am correct in regard to this point. In the West End, however much we may find fault with the water companies in other respects, we always have a full supply of water. The deficiency of supply is reserved for the people of East London, who cannot protect themselves and who are absolutely defenceless. Since a similar Bill to this was brought in two or three years ago, we have had a general election of the London County Council. In that election I took an active part, and I therefore know something about the feelings of the electors in regard to this matter. The people of London are of one mind that this control should be confided to the London County Council or to some similar body directly representative of the electors, and over which the ratepayers can exercise a certain amount of popular control. I am glad to see that all parties are of opinion that such a necessity of life as water should not be in private hands for any long period, and I would urge the Government, in consideration of the poor and working classes, to bring about some change for the better as speedily as possible.

MR. STEADMAN: I desire to support the remarks of the hon. Member for Whitechapel in reference to the increase of the water rate. It is quite true, as the hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division states, that they do not propose to increase the water charge in this sense; they do not charge so much per gallon for every gallon of water consumed, but under the existing law the companies are allowed to charge one shilling in the pound on the rateable value of the house. Let me give my own case as an example. When I first became the tenant of the house I now occupy my family was young, and the house was rated on an assessment of £25 per annum. Therefore I had to pay twenty-five shillings as water rate. When the next quinquennial valuation came round my assessment was increased by £2. Although my family had grown up and some of them left home, with the result that we were consuming less water, I had to pay two shillings more as water rate. When the assessment takes place next year my rate may be still further increased, although I am consuming still less water. That is the position of the whole of the people in the East End of London. There are a million working men in East London, and those who do not pay the water rate direct to the company, as I do, have to pay it indirectly through the rent.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): Throughout the debate this question has been argued with comparatively little reference to the most important underlying consideration in the whole matter, namely, the question of public health. It has been argued from the point of view of purchase of the property of the water companies; it has been argued from the point of view of control by a public body; but underlying these considerations there is the still greater and more urgent question of the public health of the community, and in dealing with one of the prime necessities of life that consideration more than any other ought certainly to influence votes in this House. I hope that any Members who have doubts in their minds on this question will vote in the direction of sanctioning both of these Bills rather than against them, on the ground that by so doing they will be doing something for the health of the community. This question has been described as being not an urgent question. The question was urgent nearly thirty years ago, and it has been getting more urgent every year; but yet the representative of the Local Government Board tells us to-day that it is not an urgent question, and that it can be put off still longer. We have been over and over again within measurable distance of a national disaster through the action of the London water companies during the last few years. If those water famines had happened to coincide with an epidemic of cholera or any similar disease we should have had the population decimated in consequence of the deficiency of the water supply. Because

we have escaped those dangers we are to ignore them, and the Government is ignoring them by the attitude it is adopting towards these Bills. The merit of the proposal before us is that not only will it place the water supply of London under popular control, under the control of persons responsible to the inhabitants of the metropolis, but it will also seek for a water supply from new and fresh sources. In any case, it will put the matter under the control of a public authority. Now, a public authority is a body better than any other for such a purpose, because it has only one object in view, the public health; it has nothing to do but to be honest and straightforward in dealing with the money of the community, and is untouched by any considerations of dividends. I believe this is a Bill which will do for London what was found necessary in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, and all large provincial cities. Because we have not the same government in London as in these localities that is no reason why we should not avail ourselves of the opportunity of putting under the control of a public authority the management and administration of one of the prime necessaries of life, and one essential to the public health of the community.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): No one will question the right of my hon. friend the Member for Ilkeston to speak with authority on matters of public health; and I only rise to say that if he had read the Report of the Balfour and Llandaff Commissions he would have found strong testimony not only as to the quality of London water, but also as to the sufficiency of the quantity, with adequate storage, for the next forty years.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 151; Noes, 234. (Division List No. 90.)

AYES.

Abraham William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Causton, Richard Knight
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Sir Fran. H. (South'ton
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon Sir W.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Healy, Maurice (Cork)
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvon.)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. H. Sir U
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'lnd
Leng, Sir John
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M A (Queen's C
Maclean, James Mackenzie
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Maddison, Fred.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel
Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Kelly, James
O'Malley, William
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, G. W. (Reading)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Northumberl'nd)
Perks, Robert William
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, J. E. (Waterford)
Redmond, W. (Clare)
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, J. B. (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)

Sir Walter Foster.

Schwann, Charles E.
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Steadman, William Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan)
Thomas, David, A. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene
Wedderburn, Sir William
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Woods, Samuel
Young, S. (Cavan, East)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. M'Arthur.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anstruther, H. T.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, J. E. B. (Inverness)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Alexander H.
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Digby, J. K. D. Wingfield-
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Donkin, Richard Sim
Dorrington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. R. Douglas
Faber, George Denison
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edwd.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne.
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitzgerald, Sir R. Penrose
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Geo. J. (Sussex)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverp'l)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thos. (Londonderry)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillw'n-(Swan'a
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Myers, William Henry
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp

Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rankin, Sir James
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Sir H. M. (Lambeth)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (B'ghm.)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hon. E. R (Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whitmore and Mr. Goulding.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

LONDON WATER (WELSH SUPPLY) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg formally to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR FREDERICK DIXON-HARTLAND: Sir, in rising to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill, I wish to state that I am not a shareholder, nor in any way connected with any water company. I am much surprised that the London County Council, after the way in which it was received by the House last year when they did not dare even to take a Second Reading, should have again brought it forward. Two very important things have happened since then. The first is the Report of the Royal Commission, which has been so often alluded to in the debate on the last Bill; and, on the question of urgency, Sir Alexander Binnie, the engineer of the London County Council, stated before the Royal Commission that there was a supply sufficient for the next ten or fifteen years. Before that time has elapsed the reservoirs approved of by this House will have come into operation. Then with regard to the amount of water which the scheme proposes to take for the benefit of London. In the first part of the scheme it only proposes to get 121,000,000 gallons per day, whereas the Thames in flood time passes 1,200,000,000 gallons a day over Teddington Weir, and in ordinary times 300,000,000 gallons. Even in ordinary time this is 100,000,000 gallons more than the 200,000,000 a day we consider necessary for the navigation of the river, and is about the amount which will be obtained from Wales by the first part of the scheme. During the drought which has lately taken place the average was 80,000,000, and the lowest day was 50,000,000. In addition to this it is very objectionable that the water is proposed to be remitted by a conduit 117 miles long, and afterwards by forty-five miles of pipes. The lowest estimate of Sir Alexander Binnie was from £10,000,000 to £14,000,000, while the other estimates in the Report of the Royal Commission are very much higher. In the statement sent out by the London County Council in support of the Bill, they quote from the Royal Commission's Report—

"There is no doubt something attractive in the scheme of bringing water from the Welsh mountains for the supply of London, and one would be glad if it were possible now to secure a water shed to be used hereafter if London should require it."

But they forget to state the remainder of the paragraph—

"That assuming the water should prove sufficient in quality and quantity, the fact remains that it is much more costly than the supply from the Thames, and that it is unnecessary to incur this extra cost now, as the supply from the Thames will be adequate in quantity and quality up to 1941."

As regards the quality of the water, the experience of Glasgow, which is one of the cities that has been mentioned, is not

such as would induce London to be supplied in the same way as water is supplied to that city. The Report of the Royal Commission itself says—

"A vast amount of lead would be brought in the supply from Wales, which would have to be carefully treated."

The second point was that last summer was the driest we have had for a considerable time. The Conservancy, at the request of the Government, allowed the water companies to take a very much larger quantity of water from the Thames than was in accordance with the Act of Parliament, and this was done, because by the Inter-communication Bill brought in by the Government, it would save the East of London from another water famine. I cannot but feel some pride that the inter-communication question which was established by the Government Bill was first brought before the House by a Bill which I brought in, and which was thrown out by the London County Council, but the principle of which has survived, and has been of such service to the whole of London. If, during the dry summer, the Thames, without these water reservoirs, was able to supply London at the driest time with 50,000,000 gallons over at Teddington Weir, I do not think that with those reservoirs which are so rapidly approaching completion, that London need have any fear whatever as to the supply or any necessity for any urgency during the next three years, as has been spoken of by the hon. Member. There is another question which is very important to this House. Supposing that the supply of the water companies is taken from Wales instead of the Thames, what is to become of the Upper Thames itself? You will have to consider this—that almost the whole revenue of the Upper Thames is drawn from the water companies. It is in consequence of this revenue that we are enabled to keep up the locks and weirs and make practical the navigation of the river. That if the water came from Wales the Government would have to find some means by which the navigation could be kept up. At any rate, as much as is necessary for navigation. If the money does not come from the water companies, I do not know where it is to come from. The matter will have to be considered by Parliament, and it will become necessary for the House of Commons to supply some means by which the interests of the Upper Thames, both for navigation and for pleasure traffic, shall be preserved. The last question I have to speak on is that of the purity of the Thames water for drinking purposes. At the present moment there are 500,000 extra people drinking pure water from the Thames, whereas four years ago they made it of an impure character. The report of all the authorities is that the water from the Thames is purer water than anywhere else. It is a very singular thing that the places from which the County Council proposes to take their water actually dried up during the last drought, while the Thames water kept all right. The action of the water of the Thames coming over weirs, and the various points of flow, is this—as everybody in authority will say—that it causes it to be the purest water that any place can have. It is not mixed with sewage or any other noxious thing. I, therefore, hope that this Bill will not be passed, and that the ratepayers will be saved an enormous expense, by which they would not get so good a supply for London as that which exists at the present moment. Under these circumstances I strongly oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, and hope that the House of Commons will not allow the ratepayers' money to be wasted in the way in which it would be.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*SIR J. T. DILLWYN LLEWELYN (Swansea Town): I beg to second the motion for the rejection of the Bill. I should be exceedingly sorry if it was thought that no Member from Wales was prepared to speak on this subject. I represent a borough which has not only to take care of itself in regard to its water works, but to secure a supply of good, pure water from an adjacent county. I am also a member of the county council of Glamorganshire, and we require a supply of Welsh water for our own purposes. In the great coal field, of which Glamorganshire is the centre, we are liable to have our water polluted, and it is not always pure in itself, lying as it does on the main coal.

Some of it is full of mineral matter, and unfit for domestic purposes, and, therefore, we have to go outside the county to the region of the old red sandstone to obtain a supply of pure water. In the Rhondda Valley there is a population of 150,000 to 200,000, and we oppose this measure because we think we should get a supply of our own Welsh water in the first instance. At the same time, water is not given to an individual or a county, but should be available for the whole country; and I should be very sorry to see a definite refusal given to allow water to be taken from Wales to supply London if only the Government were to take the question up. I have long held that water-shed areas should be established with a view of giving water to places in the same district, even though they might not be in the same county. It seems to me that provision should also be made in establishing these water-shed areas for the shipping, in the future, and for large populations. We in Glamorgan look forward to a large increase in the industrial population, not only because of the presence of coal, but because other industries will be attracted by the coal, and on the seaboard where ships will come to carry away the products of these industries. Our county council, therefore, opposes this measure at present for giving power to carry water away from Wales to London.

MR. STUART thought the argument of the hon. Member for Swansea Town was rather in favour of the measure than against it, because he represented a borough which had gone beyond its own county for water. However that might be, in anything the promoters of the Bill might do in any area of that district, they would be bound to recognise the claims of Glamorganshire for their share of the water of the district. That statement, he submitted, met the point of the hon. Member. The question of a Welsh water supply, as opposed to a Thames water supply, was altogether independent of the question of authority or the question of purchase; it was a question of what was the best and purest source of supply; but whichever the best source might be, and the concensus of opinion was that the Welsh source was the purest, the question of what water should be brought into London could never be a purely financial question. It was considered by the Royal Commission on a financial basis, and the financial basis alone could not be regarded as an element of consideration. The promoters were also of opinion that the figures brought before the Royal Commission as to the cost of obtaining a supply from Wales were seriously erroneous, as had been shown in a letter to *The Times* by Mr. Shaw Lefevre. All the promoters asked was that the Bill should be sent upstairs to a Committee, which should consider the relative merits of the two sources of supply, not only from the financial point of view, but also on other bases.

MR. JOHN BURNS only rose to reply to a statement made by the hon. Member for Uxbridge, who, as Chairman of the Thames Conservancy Board, might be expected to know something about the river. The hon. Member had asked what would happen if the County Council took the place of the water companies and obtained a supply from Wales instead of the Thames watershed, and had pointed out that the revenue of the Conservancy would almost disappear. It was almost time that the Thames Conservancy obtained its revenues from other sources than the water companies, and if they were to do that they would look more sharply after the companies. He also mentioned that according to the report for 1899 of the engineer to the Thames Conservancy, proceedings had been instituted last year in twenty-four cases for non-compliance with the provisions of the Act in respect of pollution, and sixteen convictions obtained against offending parties. To avoid this contamination, Londoners wanted to get their water from cloud land in Wales, where there were no effluents from sewage farms or house-boats.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District) stated that the Glamorgan County Council opposed the Bill on somewhat different grounds to those set forth by other hon. Members. They were vitally interested in the question, and, as they did not desire to acquire a monopoly over the watershed area, they desired to prevent a monopoly being granted to others. They opposed the Bill on the ground that powers so large ought not to be entrusted to one local authority, however important. They asked that the House would not give to the London County Council a first charge upon the

natural resources of the Welsh counties. The second principle which operated against this Bill had reference to the case of counties and boroughs which were increasing in population from year to year, and were in close proximity to a watershed. Such local authorities had the first claim to the natural resources of the district. Those were two broad principles on which he ventured to oppose the treatment of this great matter by way of private Bill. He suggested that the Bill should be withdrawn for this year, and thus give time for the House to consider what the principles really were.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I merely rise for a moment in order to reply to the hon. Member for Hoxton; but before I do that I wish to say a word with regard to the observations of the hon. Member for Battersea as to the impurity of the supply from the Thames. It is very easy to quote from a report isolated passages which appear to support one's argument, but the balance of authority is entirely against the hon. Member. The whole of this question has been examined by two Commissions, both of which came to the conclusion that on the whole, the quality of the London water as supplied at present was admirable. The hon. Member for Hoxton has referred to something which I said at the close of my speech. The views that I expressed were that the question of the supply of water from Wales was a very important one, but not a matter of immediate urgency. What I think I said was that the proposal that the water authority of London should be in the field in time to secure the reversion of a water area in Wales is one for which I have a great deal of sympathy, and I think that would be an exceedingly proper subject for the consideration of the future authority who should have charge of the water supply of London. But it would be out of the question to entrust that duty to a body like the present body, with regard to which the House has just decided that it should not be the authority in the matter.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON, in recommending the withdrawal of the motion, said that the London County Council had done their best to carry out their duty by the ratepayers and water consumers, and to solve this most difficult problem. They had been defeated and thwarted by the Government. The whole responsibility now lay on the Government to deal with the question. He himself was, however, looking to the past, not very sanguine that the Government would rise to the occasion and deal with the matter in a far-reaching or satisfactory way.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

THE METROPOLITAN WATER COMPANIES BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have examined this Bill, and I feel it my duty to advise the House that it is one which the House cannot properly entertain as a private Bill. The promoters do not ask Parliament to confer any powers upon them, but they invite it to bestow new and large powers upon a public department—the Local Government Board—to enable it to initiate and superintend a scheme for carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on London Water Supply, and it extends the provisions of a public Bill of last session. These being the objects of the Bill, it ought not to have been introduced as a private Bill, and I trust that the hon. Member in charge will withdraw it.

Order discharged; Bill withdrawn.

GLASTONBURY CORPORATION GAS BILL.

Reported; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

GLASTONBURY AND STREET GAS BILL.

Reported [Parties do not proceed] Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dunblane, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Barnes; and Newport Pagnell; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Trowbridge; Kingsland; and Leeds; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sunderland, (twenty-three); Trowbridge; Penshurst; Crouch End; Preston; Manchester; London (four); Wesleyan Methodist Conference; and Coalville; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (NO. 2) BILL.

Two Petitions from Sheffield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Coalville; and London (two); to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS).

Copy presented, of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Chelsea, Finsbury, Kensington, and Paddington, and incorporating the Councils thereof; and for other purposes in connection therewith [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF ROMAN CATHOLICS (COLONIES).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to University Education of Roman Catholics in certain Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2392 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy presented, of Return of Deputy Lieutenants displaced during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]: to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address, 15th March; *Mr. Strachey*]; to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "relating to Imperial Revenue (Collection and Expenditure) (Great Britain and Ireland) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 318, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Joseph A. Pease.*)

MERCHANT SERVICE (CERTIFICATES OF MASTERS, MATES, SKIPPERS, AND SECOND HANDS).

Return ordered, "showing, for the last completed year, the number of successful and unsuccessful candidates (1) for Masters' and Mates' Certificates of Competency in the United Kingdom; and (2) for Skippers' and Second Hands' Certificates of Competency in England and Wales and Ireland, distinguishing the ports at which the several examinations were held, and stating the fees charged." —(*Captain Sinclair.*)

PROCEDURE OF THE HOUSE—ALIEN SEAMEN ON BRITISH TRANSPORTS—"BLOCKING" NOTICES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I desire to call attention, Mr. Speaker, to what I regard as an abuse of the practice of this House. On Tuesday last* the hon. Member for Middlesbrough essayed to move the adjournment of the House on a definite matter of urgent public importance. You considered that the motion

* See page 455 of this volume.

was not definite enough to justify you in submitting it to the House, and suggested that the hon. Member had better give notice for another day.

*MR. SPEAKER: What is the point of order the hon. Member wishes to raise?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I explain? I have no interest in this matter, and have not consulted the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. What I seek is to safeguard as far as I can the rights——

*MR. SPEAKER: What is the point of order? The hon. Member has not yet indicated it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: It is not so much a point of order as one of practice. My hon. friend, acting on your suggestion, gave notice that he would move the adjournment to-day.

*MR. SPEAKER: I did not suggest he should give any notice, but that he should bring the matter forward on another day.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And he intimated he would do so to-day. But on the Order Paper of to-day there appears a notice of motion by the hon. Member for Argyllshire in relation to the same matter—the presence of foreigners on transports carrying men and stores to South Africa—which is manifestly intended to prevent the hon. Member for Middlesbrough from bringing on his motion for the adjournment of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: This is quite irregular. The hon. Member objects to the hon. Member for Argyllshire having exercised his undoubted right to put down this notice of motion.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, Sir.

*MR. SPEAKER: There can be no objection taken to that. There is no point of order.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With every respect to you, Sir, I would suggest it is an abuse of the practice of this House. I want to know whether, when a notice of motion is put down which is declared in the public prints to be for the sole purpose of preventing——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to state that. No point of order arises.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With great respect, Sir, the point I wished to raise was whether it was not an abuse of the practice of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order, or abuse of practice. The hon. Member for Argyllshire had an undoubted right to put down this motion.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask whether there is any remedy for meeting a case of this kind, where, at the suggestion of the Chair, the moving of the adjournment was postponed for a couple of days?

*MR. SPEAKER: The suggestion of the Chair was simply that the hon. Member was out of order, and that if he wished to put himself in order he would have to bring the matter forward in an amended form another day. I might have simply pointed out that the hon. Member's motion was not in order, and have called upon the Clerk to proceed to the Orders of the Day. But I did suggest to him that he might move it another day.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Might that not be regarded as part and parcel of a continuous transaction?

*MR. SPEAKER: No.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—USAGES OF WAR—BOER ABUSE OF THE WHITE FLAG.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a correct copy of the despatch of Lord Roberts remonstrating with Presidents Kruger and Steyn in reference to the abuse of the white flag, and the reply of President Steyn.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): As far as I know, the reports published in the newspapers were complete and accurate; but in any case the Government have no objection to laying the de-

spatches asked for on the Table of the House. I believe they are identical in terms with the despatches as they appeared in the newspapers.

MR. DILLON: Perhaps the Government will satisfy themselves that they are accurate reports before they are laid.

BOER ARRESTS OF NON-COMBATANTS —CASE OF MR. GARSTIN.

MR. WASON (Clackmannan and Kilross): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information as to the whereabouts of Mr. Garstin, a British resident magistrate in South Africa, who has been taken prisoner by the rebel Dutch; whether they have threatened to try him for murder; and if so, on what ground; and whether Her Majesty's Government will give instructions to the proper officer in South Africa to endeavour to obtain Mr. Garstin's release on the ground that he was a non-combatant, and had merely taken steps in his civil capacity to enforce the law for the suppression of rebellion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I was informed by Sir A. Milner, on 19th March, that it was reported that Mr. Garstin, the magistrate for Kenhardt, had been sent to Bloemfontein for trial, but without further particulars. It was not then known by the rebel Dutch that Bloemfontein was occupied by us. I have asked the Foreign Office to make inquiry, and representations, if necessary, through the United States Consul at Pretoria.

DUTCH DISLOYALTY IN CAPE TOWN —CASE OF MR. DU PLESSIS.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now inform the House of the result of his inquiries as to whether Mr. Barend du Plessis, a well to do farmer of Hanover District, Cape Town, was arrested on the 10th of December last on a charge of high treason based on the unsupported statement of a discharged native servant, and was kept in prison for ten days, and then set free, the Solicitor General refusing to prosecute; and whether any compensation will be made to this gentleman.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Barend du Plessis was arrested by the military on 11th December on a charge of high treason. Evidence was given by three native servants as to alleged treasonable words, but this was unsupported. He was committed for trial on 16th December and the papers sent to the Solicitor General, Grahamstown, who declined to prosecute, so du Plessis was released 20th December. Sir Alfred Milner informs me that he has not yet heard if the military consider this a case for compensation.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: Were the servants discharged who gave the information?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information as to that.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What were they paid for it?

[No answer was given.]

MAGERSFONTEIN ENGAGEMENT-LORD METHUEN'S DESPATCHES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the original communication, dated 4th January, sent home by Sir Redvers Buller, who was then in chief command of the Army in South Africa, from Lord Methuen, respecting the reverse at Magersfontein on the 10th and 11th December, will be published; and what is the reason for withholding from the public a communication with reference to a matter of such general interest.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): For the reasons which I stated in answer to the hon. Member on the 23rd, it is intended not to publish this communication.

LORD METHUEN AND COLONEL GOUGH.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Lord Methuen has sent home any communication with reference to the circumstances under which he ordered Colonel Gough to retire from the front; whether Colonel Gough was ordered home by Lord Methuen because he refused to obey an order of Lord Methuen's; and, will the promised inquiry into Colonel

* See page 173 of this volume.

Gough's conduct embrace an inquiry into Lord Methuen's conduct.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Pending the inquiry which is to be held into Colonel Gough's case it should not, I think, be discussed by way of question and answer in this House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does the hon. Gentleman decline to say whether Colonel Gough disobeyed orders or not?

*MR. WYNDHAM: An inquiry will be held in this case, and it would be most improper, in my opinion, to discuss any of the matters, essential or subsidiary, which are likely to come before the tribunal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will Lord Methuen's conduct form a subject of inquiry?

[No reply was given.]

THE PROVISIONING OF MAFEKING.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the statement of Mr. Julius Weil, of Messrs. Julius Weil and Co., Government contractors, to the effect that in addition to executing an order given by Lord Edward Cecil for Colonel Hore's forces, numbering some 550 men and 500 horses, he had forwarded to Mafeking very large stocks on his own initiative and at his own risk, knowing that in the event of hostilities large supplies would be required by the population of that town, numbering in all some 10,000 persons; and whether he will inquire into the facts of the case; and, if they be found as stated, whether the Secretary of State will consider the propriety of suitably recognising the foresight of the contractor who thus, acting on his own initiative, rendered possible the protracted defence of Mafeking.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. I hope that it will before long be possible to obtain from the gallant officer in command at Mafeking a full report of the circumstances attending the provisioning of that town.

COMMISSIONS FOR COLONISTS.

MR. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any commissions will be offered in the infantry and Royal Artillery to New Zealand and Tasmania, and if it is intended to offer any commissions in the cavalry to any of the colonies.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Ten Royal Artillery and twenty infantry commissions have been offered to New Zealand, and two Royal Artillery and five infantry commissions to Tasmania. No cavalry commissions are being offered to the colonies, because we have been led to believe that they would rarely be acceptable. But, as I have said, the proportions laid down will be subject to minor variations, and any suitable application from a colony for a cavalry in lieu of an infantry commission would be entertained.

C.I.V. RIFLE SIGHTS.

MR. WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any steps have been taken to remedy the defective sighting of the rifles supplied to the City of London Imperial Volunteers who are now at the front in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. New backsights have been sent out in sufficient numbers for all the Lee-Enfields in South Africa.

WAR MEDALS.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will consider, before the conclusion of hostilities, the advisability of inviting competition for the design of a South African war medal previously to any such medal being issued to the country.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Such a competition would have involved much delay. Designs have, in fact, been prepared and submitted to Her Majesty.

HORSES FOR THE ARMY.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether Captain Fife has been appointed to go to New Orleans, and Captain Tremayne to go to the Argentine Republic to purchase horses for the Army; whether he can state how many horses it is intended to purchase in those

foreign countries; and whether he is aware that in the opinion of experts Irish horses are more suitable and at the same time cheaper than imported animals.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): Captain Fife has been sent to New Orleans to purchase horses, and Captain Tremayne has been sent to Argentina to take charge of horses on board ship. I am not prepared to state the number of horses to be purchased in foreign countries. In regard to Irish horses, I have on previous occasions explained to the House that trained horses of suitable age are very difficult to obtain in Ireland, but about 5,000 have been purchased there, as already stated.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will the hon. Gentleman say how much these foreign countries have contributed to the cost of the war?

[No answer was given.]

COL. WYNNE'S FIELD ORDER.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he will publish the field order, signed by Colonel Wynne, to the troops in Natal, in the month of January last, on the occasion of the advance on Springfield.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is not intended to publish documents of this character. I may remind the hon. Member that on the 23rd inst., in answering the Member for South Donegal, I pointed out that a despatch intended for publication should be a connected account by the Officer Commanding in Chief, not containing separate communications from subordinate officers.

MR. DILLON: May I call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that the document to which I allude was not a private communication, but a field order, not in the nature of a report, and that it was partially published in the newspapers?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I think the hon. Member does not quite understand this question of despatches. That is one field order. Of course there have been scores of field orders, and scores and even hundreds of reports from officers commanding brigades and lesser units. The only documents which are published in the *London Gazette* are the despatches of the General Officer Commanding in Chief. The despatches from the Peninsula were written by the Duke of Wellington, and not by officers who commanded brigades.

See page 173 of this volume.

THE ARMAMENT OF KIMBERLEY.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that, on the relief of Kimberley, Mr. Cecil Rhodes stated in a public speech that he purposed to have Kimberley armed with artillery through the De Beers Company; and whether, in view of this gentleman's connection with the Jameson raid, he, or the De Beers Company which he controls, will be permitted to have any control of military armament.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of any such statement. The control of military armament rests with the military authorities.

SIR GEORGE WHITE.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government have been in communication with Sir Redvers Buller or Sir George White, or either of them, as to any complaints made by the latter officer, directly or indirectly, of any treatment to which he has been subjected, or any attempts to supersede him; and, if so, will he consent to the publication of such communications.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No communication of the character suggested by the hon. Member has been received.

NAVAL FORCE AT DELAGOA BAY—SEARCHES FOR CONTRABAND.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how many British warships are at present at Delagoa Bay, and the names of such vessels; and whether any attempt is being made to stop the landing of war material and men for the Boer army.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): There are on the Cape Station some twenty cruisers and gunboats, omitting

the "Powerful" and "Terrible," which have now left for their respective destinations, and an interchange of vessels between Delagoa Bay and Durban and the Cape ports is constantly taking place. The names of the ships at Delagoa Bay at the present time cannot be given without inquiry. They are at present there for the purpose of preventing the landing of contraband of war and men proved to be destined for the military service of the Boer Republics.

MR. LONSDALE: May I ask what power they have?

*MR. MACARTNEY: I think the hon Gentleman had better give notice of that question.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask whether in future, when our cruisers capture vessels suspected of carrying contraband of war, the Admiralty will refrain from ordering their dismissal before they are searched?

*MR. MACARTNEY: That, again, is a question of which I think my hon. friend had better give notice.

TRANSPORT—COMMISSARIAT ON THE "CORNWALL"

MR. ROUND (Essex, Harwich): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if his attention has been called to statements relative to the treatment of the troopers of the Imperial Yeomanry who, after embarking on board the steamship "Cornwall" at 10 a.m. on the 3rd of March, had no food served out to them till breakfast the next day, and then only two pieces of bread with Nestlé's milk spread on in lieu of butter, and nothing to drink, and for dinner two potatoes only; and if he can give any explanation of this treatment.

*MR. MACARTNEY: There is no information available as to the circumstances mentioned in the question, no report having yet come in from the officer commanding the troops on board.

TRANSPORT—THE "DUNERA."

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is now aware that Her Majesty's transport steamship "Dunera" was not neaped for three days in Port Talbot, as previously alleged, but that in fact during the whole of the time during which the steamship "Dunera" lay in that port there was ample water and width of channel for her to have departed in safety on any tide after completing her loading of coal; and whether he will state the authority upon which the previous report was based.

*MR. MACARTNEY: The "Dunera" entered Port Talbot with a falling neap tide on 7th March, and from the master's experience in going in he determined that the risk of taking the ship out after coaling, with a turn to make in the narrowest part, on a dark night, no leading light to turn on, and on a falling neap tide, was too great without, at least, the same depth of water as he had on entering, and in this opinion he was supported by the local Transport officer. She undocked on the afternoon of the 13th March. Although it is just possible that the ship might have been got out earlier, the risk would have been very great, and therefore she was practically "neaped."

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: And as to the second paragraph of the question?

*MR. MACARTNEY: Upon the authority of the Admiralty.

WAGES OF SEAMEN AND STOKERS IN THE NAVY.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the rate of wages paid to able seamen and stokers, respectively, who, being on short service, are not entitled to pensions in vessels of the Royal Navy now on service in South African waters.

*MR. MACARTNEY: The rate of wages (exclusive of allowances) paid to non-continuous (or short) service able seamen and stokers respectively is 1s. 4d. and 1s. 9d. a day in South Africa or elsewhere. There are, however, practically no able seamen or stokers entered for non-continuous service, and, as a matter of fact, on the date of the last return of numbers borne on the Cape station, there were no able seamen and only one stoker non-continuous service.

THE WAR LOAN.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether arrangements can be

made whereby the several instalments of the War Loan can be accepted on the several due dates by the various branches of the Bank of England in the provinces.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Arrangements are being made under which allottees will be able to pay their instalments at the branches of the Bank of England.

RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH—DISTURBANCES AT ANTI-WAR MEETINGS AT MARGATE.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the rioting which took place at Margate on the 14th and 15th instant, whereby the premises of a tradesman named W. J. Powell were wrecked; whether he is aware that Mr. Powell and his wife and family were afraid for several days to come into the town because of threatened violence; that the chief constable promised the mob that if they would disperse he would release two men who had been arrested for riotous conduct, which was done, and that the Mayor of Margate stated publicly that Mr. Powell had brought the trouble on himself, though his only offence was that he is opposed to the war in South Africa; and whether he will take steps to afford adequate police protection to Mr. Powell and his family and to others who may hold his views about the war.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): My attention has been called to the recent serious and discreditable disturbances at Margate, and I regret to find that the windows of Mr. Powell's premises were broken and damage done to some furniture which was exposed for sale. The authorities had no reason to believe that Mr. Powell or his family were afterwards afraid to come into the town, or that personal violence had been threatened. It is the fact that three men who had been arrested were released by the chief constable, and in the difficult circumstances in which the police officers found themselves placed I see no reason to doubt that this action was judicious. The mayor admits having stated subsequently that in his opinion Mr. Powell's conduct invited what happened. Besides his opposition to the war, there seems—rightly or wrongly—to have been a popular belief that Mr. Powell had given various indications of a feeling of disloyalty towards Her Majesty. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] I am giving the report the mayor has given me. A proclamation was issued by the police on the 16th inst. warning all persons not to take part in any breach of the peace, and there seems no reason to expect any further disturbance. The local police force is small, but every available man was made use of, and if necessity should arise the mayor can, as I am pointing out to him, of course borrow officers from neighbouring forces. The local authorities are alive to their responsibilities, and I trust they will be supported by the inhabitants of Margate in their efforts to prevent any breach of the peace being caused by excited political feelings.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Is opposition to the war, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, an act of disloyalty?

[No answer was given.]

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—CORDITE ORDERS FOR ARKLOW.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office when, and to what extent, it is proposed to give an order for cordite to the factory in Arklow.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: An order will be given to Messrs. Kynoch, to whom the Arklow works belong, within the next few days.

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF DOMINICK HOGAN.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Dominick Hogan, an Army pensioner about seventy-seven years of age, who enlisted in 1842 in the 64th Regiment and served over twenty-two years, fifteen years of which was foreign service, and who holds a medal and clasp for service in Persia, medal and clasp for service in the Indian Mutiny, and also a medal and clasp for service in China; and also holds a discharge of good character and conduct, after serving in twenty-six general and 100 other engagements, and

having been over eight years in active service and action; whether he is aware that Hogan was discharged in 1864 on a pension of 8½d. per day; whether Hogan is entitled, under the Soldiers' Deferred Pension Act, to an extra pension of 4d. per day, he having served over twenty-one years, and having attained the age of sixty years; and whether, owing to Hogan's long service and distinguished career, the War Office authorities will now consider his case with the view of increasing substantially his present pension of 8½d. per day.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: As I have already told the hon. Member, the case has been repeatedly considered, and Hogan receives the full pension to which his service entitles him.

*MR. FLAVIN: Am I to understand from the hon. Gentleman that these Army pensioners will be used as an advertisement for recruiting in the Army in Ireland?

[No answer was returned.]

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS—LIEUTENANT-COLONEL'S PAY.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether lieutenant-colonels of the Royal Army Medical Corps who are doing colonel's work can receive the rank and pay of the higher grade in which they are temporarily serving.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Regulations do not provide for the case of these officers, and it is being specially considered.

REGIMENTAL TITLES—SUGGESTED BUCKINGHAMSHIRE REGIMENT.

MR. CARLILE (Buckinghamshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the strong feeling which exists in the county of Buckingham, as shown by a resolution of the Buckinghamshire County Council in favour of having a regiment bearing the name of the county, and having a county depot; and, if so, whether the War Office can see its way to form such a regiment.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The new battalions now being raised were designated in the Army Order of 21st February. For military purposes it was judged best to add these new battalions to existing regiments, and I fear it will not be possible to accede to the wishes of the Buckinghamshire County Council.

VOLUNTEERS—PRIVILEGES TO CIVIL SERVANTS.

MR. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.) I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, in view of the fact that the Treasury have agreed to accord certain privileges as regards their civil pay to those Volunteer members of the Civil Service who have been accepted for active service in South Africa, it is intended to extend the same privileges to those postal employees who, being members of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, have volunteered for active service, and who have been accepted by the War Office authorities as members of the Army Medical Staff Corps.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Postmaster General has not received any application from the Secretary of State for War to grant the privileges referred to to members of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, but he has been asked to keep their places open for them, and this will be done.

RESIGNATION OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL ON HIS VOLUNTEERING FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what arrangements are in contemplation for the discharge of the duties of the Postmaster General during the absence on active service in South Africa of the Duke of Norfolk, K.G.; and whether during the absence of the Duke of Norfolk there will be a return to the old practice of appointing to the headship of the Postal Department a Minister with a seat in the House of Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Duke of Norfolk has resigned.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: As to the second paragraph.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Has the resignation been accepted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Postmaster General is about to proceed to South Africa; if so, in what capacity and for what length of time he is to be absent from the country; whether there is any precedent for the Minister of an important Department thus leaving his official post; and by whom his ministerial duties will be discharged during his absence.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already answered this question.

VOLUNTEER UNIFORMS.

MR. F. W. WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether khaki is to be introduced as the uniform of the Volunteers, and, if not, in view of the number of recruits now joining the Volunteers, and the necessity of providing them with uniforms, whether any change in the colour and material of such uniforms will be made during the present year.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The question of a general service uniform for the Regular Army is at present under consideration. Until a pattern is approved for the Regulars it is not probable that Volunteer commanding officers will wish to make any radical change in the uniform of their corps.

VOLUNTEERS—SOLICITORS' ARTICLED CLERKS.

SIR JOHN JENKINS (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to a possible hardship that may arise in the case of a person articled to a solicitor who has in the present exceptional crisis volunteered for service in South Africa or joined a militia regiment; and whether, seeing that a solicitor has to declare that the clerk has not been engaged in any other employment during the time he has been articled, he will introduce a Bill to remove any disability for admission as solicitor of articled clerks by reason of employment in the auxiliary forces.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The circumstance to which the hon. Baronet refers is not peculiar to the legal profession. There are many other contracts of service and employment in which a similar state of circumstances may arise. It would not, in my opinion, be possible to legislate specially for articled clerks to solicitors.

HULME BARRACKS, MANCHESTER.

MR. DRAGE (Derby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War whether the Hulme Barracks at Manchester have been condemned for sanitary reasons, and whether the sanitary arrangements there are known to the War Office to be unsatisfactory; and whether several cases of sickness have occurred that can be traced to the unsanitary condition of the barracks, and whether, under the circumstances, he will advise the removal of the 3rd Battalion of the Derbyshire Regiment to healthier quarters.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The Hulme Barracks were not condemned for sanitary reasons. The general officer commanding reports the sanitary arrangements satisfactory, and that there have been no cases of sickness traceable to insanitary conditions. But the barracks are undoubtedly old. The battalion is going into camp about 1st May.

CYPRUS—FAMAGUSTA HARBOUR.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if any work in connection with the Famagusta Harbour has yet been begun, and if the necessary preliminary legislation has been passed by the Legislative Council of Cyprus; and whether it is proposed to carry out any railway works within the town, or to destroy any part of the sea front of the old castle dating from the thirteenth century.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative in regard to both the points. In regard to the second, the final plans for the railway have not yet been received, as it is not intended to commence it till the harbour works are well advanced. When they are submitted, they will be carefully examined with a view to avoiding as far as may be practicable any interference with the old fortifications, and I shall give full consideration to any representations on the subject which my noble friend may desire to make personally.

INDIA—AGRICULTURAL BANKS.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what have been the practical results of Mr. Nicholson's inquiry of 1897 regarding agricultural banks as a means of relieving the rural population of India from oppression by the money-lenders; what were Mr. Nicholson's recommendations as regards making early experiments in establishing agricultural banks; and what steps have been taken to carry out his recommendations, and what success has attended the action of Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have not yet received from the Government of India an expression of their views upon the proposals made in Mr. Nicholson's report upon the formation of agricultural banks; but I understand that orders have recently been passed by the Government of Madras on this important matter. I am not yet in a position to state in detail the nature of those orders, but I expect to hear during the present season from the Government of India, who have only recently received the report of the Madras Government on the subject.

INDIAN FAMINE — SUGGESTED INQUIRY.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, looking to the early recurrence of famine in India, and the unparalleled magnitude of the present visitation, as described by the Viceroy of India, he will suggest to the Government of India to institute, at a convenient time, a detailed inquiry into the condition and food supply of a few typical villages in the provinces liable to famine, with a view to ascertain whether, by local storage of grain in times of plenty, and other precautionary measures, the economic condition of such villages may be so far strengthened that the failure of a year's harvest will not bring the cultivators into danger of starvation.

LORD G. HAMILTON: During the past twenty year investigations have been made by two Famine Commissions, and there has also been an exhaustive inquiry into the condition of the people. In these circumstances I am unwilling to call on the Government of India to institute at this moment another general inquiry of the kind suggested in the question. But the hon. Member may be sure that the knowledge and experience which is now being gained will be most carefully turned to account, and that any specific question will be investigated concerning which there may be insufficiency of information, with a view to the adoption of such further precautionary or economic measures as may appear to be advisable.

INDIAN FAMINE—RELIEF WORKS.

MR. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether some portion of the labour now employed on relief work in India is being used or can be used for the further provision of tanks and other minor irrigation works.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The periodical reports received from the famine districts show that famine workers are largely employed on digging canals, excavating or improving tanks, and sinking wells. But it is not possible everywhere to construct suitable works of this kind.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY ARBITRATION.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any information to give the House in reference to the delay in stating the award of the Delagoa Railway arbitration.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I am sorry to say we have no information to give the House on this subject.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how soon the matter will be settled?

*MR. BRODRICK: We are without information on that point at present.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will put another question next week.

BRITISH PROPERTY HOLDERS IN THE UNITED STATES.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can give the House any information regarding the treaty, reported to have been ratified by the United States Senate on the 22nd March, as to the right of British subjects

to hold real and personal property in the United States.

*MR. BRODRICK: A treaty on this subject was signed by Lord Pauncefote and Mr. Hay on 2nd March, and has been ratified with certain modifications by the United States Senate. These modifications are under consideration, and I cannot make any statement at present.

CHINA—BLUE-BOOK.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the probable discussion on China to-morrow, a Blue-book on China will be laid on the Table?

*MR. BRODRICK: Papers in reference to China have been laid on the Table, and copies are to be had at the Vote Office.

DEATH DUTIES—ALLEGED EVASIONS.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has come to any, and, if so, to what conclusion on the point which he stated on the 22nd February* was under consideration with reference to the evasion of the law relating to death duties in the cases of estates of great value; and whether any, and, if so, what steps are in contemplation to obtain power to prevent the evasion of the law relating to death duties in the particular instance of the estate of a millionaire peer lately deceased.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The point which I referred to on February 22nd is dealt with by Clause 10 of the Finance Bill. There is no suspicion whatever that there has been any attempt at evasion of the law in the case of the estate to which I presume the second paragraph refers. Probate has been granted on an affidavit which stated a provisional sum only, and which explicitly intimated that a further account would follow. This affidavit, of course, referred only to personal property. In respect of settled property, a separate account has to be brought in, and for this six months is allowed from the death. The six months have not yet expired.

LIGHTS ON THE MANACLES ROCKS.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the casualties that have recently occurred, steps can be taken to provide a lighthouse or lightship on the Manacles Rocks, off the south coast of Cornwall; and whether either the Trinity House or the Board of Trade are doing anything in the matter.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Although the matter has been fully considered, no action is being taken by the Trinity House at present. The Manacles Rocks and adjacent coast lie well out of the ordinary Channel track. The casualties which have given notoriety to this part of the coast have occurred to outward bound vessels which had just left known points of departure. The expenditure involved would not be justifiable in view of the demands at this time for new lighthouses and sea marks in many much more urgent cases.

ACCIDENT ON THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY — RAILWAY SERVANTS HOURS OF LABOUR.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the statement of Colonel Yorke, a Board of Trade inspector, in his Report upon a collision on the Great Western Railway which took place on the morning of the 27th December, 1899; whether he has noted a statement by Colonel Yorke to the effect that it is not always possible for the normal hours of work to be strictly adhered to at holiday seasons, but men who have been for fourteen or fifteen hours on the footplate can hardly be expected to display that unremitting vigilance which is necessary for safety; and whether it is the intention of the Government to propose legislation with a view to preventing danger to the lives of the travelling public by the working of excessive hours on the part of railway servants.

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir. I have read the Report referred to, a copy of which was forwarded to the company immediately it was issued. As my hon. friend's question states, the Inspecting Officer, while commenting on the unduly long hours worked, inferred that they were caused by the Christmas traffic. The Railway Regulation Act of 1893 enables the Board of Trade to call upon any company to submit a schedule of reasonable hours, and these provisions are quite

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., page 798.

sufficient to enable the Board to deal, where necessary, with undue hours of work.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he would be willing to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing all instances of working hours exceeding twelve continuously worked by the servants of the railway companies in England during the months of January and February, 1900.

*MR. RITCHIE: I hardly think I should be justified in asking the railway companies for a Return which would involve very laborious examination, having regard to the fact that Parliament in 1893 approved legislation which enables railway servants and those who represent them to make complaints as to excessive hours of work, and in proper cases to obtain redress.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that most of the railway companies have already prepared such a Return for their own information. Will he inquire?

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly; and if that is the case, of course the difficulty I speak of will not arise.

RELIEVING OFFICERS AND PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any cases have been recently brought to his notice of the proprietors of some private lunatic asylums having offered commissions to relieving officers; and, if so, will he state particulars regarding such cases, and what steps he intends taking regarding the same.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The attention of the Local Government Board has been drawn to cases of the kind referred to in the question. They are in communication with the Lunacy Commissioners with regard to the precise course which should be adopted in the matter, but not in a position to say more on the subject at present.

CHILDREN IN METROPOLITAN WORKHOUSES.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state the number of children at present in the metropolitan workhouses, distinguishing those under two years of age.

*MR. CHAPLIN: The total number, according to the latest returns, is 1,716, of whom 552 are infants under two years of age.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL—SITTING TENANTS.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in the progress of his Agricultural Holdings Bill, he will introduce provisions to protect the improvements of sitting tenants; whether he is aware of the inconvenience, in the administration of the existing Act, from the practice of ascertaining the value of improvements by means of mechanical scales of unexhausted manures, irrespective of results, and will provide that due credit shall be given for continuous good husbandry and accumulated manurial fertility; and whether he will favourably consider a proposal to simplify the First Schedule by introducing a definition of improvement, in accordance with Clause 1 of the Bill, as including anything done by the tenant whereby the letting value of the holding is increased.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): It would, I think, be very inconvenient that I should anticipate any statement which it may be my duty to make with regard to the suggestions of the hon. Baronet when the Bill is considered in Committee. Proposals of the kind cannot be properly discussed in the form of question and answer.

DR. FARQUHARSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman, under the circumstances, undertake not to bring on the Second Reading of the Bill before Easter, so that we may have an opportunity of consulting our constituents with regard to it?

*MR. LONG: No, Sir.

POST OFFICE OFFICIALS—MINIMUM PERIOD OF ATTENDANCE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that the Tweedmouth Committee recommended that, in the case of London and provincial town postmen,

no period of duty necessitating an attendance at the office should be reckoned at less than an hour, such principle is in effect applied to the class of sorting clerks; and, if so, would he state the minimum period of attendance relative thereto.

MR. HANBURY: It is the case that the Tweedmouth Committee made the recommendation described by the hon. Member as to postmen; and the authority of the Treasury has recently been given to apply the same principle to the class of sorting clerks and telegraphists. The rule now is that in the case of sorting clerks, sorters, telegraphists, and postmen no separate attendance shall be reckoned at less than an hour, except when the attendance falls within an hour of the preceding or succeeding continuous duty. In such a case only the actual time of attendance and the interval between the two attendances will be counted.

POSTMEN'S FEDERATION—REFUSAL OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the application of the general secretary to the Postmen's Federation for leave of absence to enable him to attend meetings of the executive of the Federation, to be held on the 29th, 30th, and 31st instant, was refused, although leave of absence was given to other members of the executive who reside in London districts; and whether in view of the fact that the General Post Office authorities always profess a readiness to give facilities to the officers of the various associations of employees to conduct the business of these bodies, and in view of the importance of the secretary of the executive being present, he will see that leave is given them to attend.

MR. HANBURY: I have not received the reply to this question.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): May I ask whether the delay is caused by the absence of the Postmaster General, who is going to the front? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that even to-day three postmen from the same post office have been allowed leave of absence?

MR. HANBURY: I have no information.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: How is it, in view of the fact that the Post Office authorities have every means of communication at their disposal, in the shape of telegraph and telephone wires, they cannot give a simple answer to a straight question put in this House?

MR. HANBURY: All I have to say is that I have no information.

SORTING CLERKS AND POSTMEN—HOURS OF SERVICE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that at certain offices sorting clerks and postmen are called upon to perform daily duties necessitating an attendance of 7 hours and 45 minutes (5 hours and 15 minutes day duty, and 2 hours and 30 minutes night duty), such being nine minutes in excess of eight hours; and, if so, would he, on such cases being laid before him, take such steps as would result in their re-adjustment.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware of duties arranged as described, and will be glad of particulars in order that if necessary the attendance may be modified. (An attendance such as that specified would be six minutes in excess of eight hours—not nine minutes as stated).

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that at certain post offices sorting clerks are on Sundays compelled to remain on night duty for forty minutes and to receive payment for thirty minutes, instead of three quarters of an hour; and, if so, will he, on the cases being specified, take such steps as will ensure the removal of the grievance complained of.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster General is not aware of the existence of such a practice, and will be glad to be furnished with particulars in order that if there is any infraction of rule it may be remedied.

SUB-POSTMASTERS' SUPERANNUATION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, under what section of the Superannuation Act of 1859 the condition is imposed that sub-postmasters must, as a

condition of being entitled to superannuation, have obtained a Civil Service certificate, and have devoted their whole time to the service of the Department.

MR. HANBURY: A Civil Service certificate is required by Section 17 of the Act. In the exercise of the discretion conferred upon them by Section 2 of the Act the Treasury have uniformly declined to recognise any claim to superannuation under that section on the part of persons holding situations in the Civil Service of the State the duties of which are not such as to require that the holder should give his whole time to the public service. Due regard is, of course, paid to the claims of any such persons who might have acquired a claim to superannuation before the Act of 1859.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say if all officials coming under the Civil Services superannuation scheme give their whole time to their duties?

MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir.

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM—THE BUCKLAND COLLECTION.

LORD BALCARRES: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether it has been decided to remove the Museum of Fish Culture from the Victoria and Albert Museum; and, if not, whether any steps are being taken by the Department to develop and keep this collection in proper order, and to provide space for it under the new building scheme.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I stated on Monday last* that no decision with reference to the Museum of Fish Culture had yet been arrived at. No steps are therefore being taken at present.

LORD BALCARRES: Will the right hon. Gentleman be able to answer if I repeat the question in two or three weeks?

SIR J. GORST: I cannot say.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT (1869) AMENDMENT ACT, 1873.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if he can inform the House how many schools have come within the exceptions described in Section 3 of the Endowed Schools Act (1869) Amendment Act, 1873; for how many of them schemes have been framed, submitted, and approved, under that section and Section 75 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870; and if Her Majesty's Inspectors, under Sub-section 3 of Section 3, can inspect such schools without the assent, previously obtained, of the trustees or governors.

SIR J. GORST: The reply to the first paragraph is, the number known to the Education Department is eighty-nine; in answer to the second it is forty-three; and in the third, yes.

HORNING (NORFOLK) SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. PRICE: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Bishop of Norwich has expressed his unwillingness to continue to allow the School Board of Horning, Norfolk, the use of the school there, although willing to allow its use as a voluntary school; and whether, if the Vice-President has any power in the matter he will refuse his sanction to the change, or at least insist upon such a substantial guarantee of subscriptions as to afford a reasonable chance of the school being efficient.

SIR J. GORST: The Committee of Council have no information on the facts stated in the first paragraph, and no application from either the Bishop of Norwich or the School Board of Horning has been received in the Education Department.

OLDHAM SCHOOL BOARD GRANT.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Oldham): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Oldham School Board will lose in grant under the new Code a sum estimated at nearly £400; and whether this loss is owing to the average efficiency, or standard of efficiency, of schools contemplated under the new Code being below that attained by the schools of the Oldham Board.

SIR J. GORST: The estimate of the loss of the Oldham School Board is £336, which would be made good by a rate of one-eighth of a penny in the £. The

* See page 323 of this volume.

standard of efficiency is not, in the opinion of the Committee of Council, correctly measured by the amount of grant earned.

THE NEW CODE—PUPIL TEACHERS.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Hertfordshire, Hertford), on behalf of the hon. Member for West Bradford: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if he can state the changes made by the new Code with regard to the payments for pupil teachers.

SIR J. GORST: The grants now paid for pupil teachers average 40s. per annum, schools receiving more or less, according to the results of the examinations. Under the Code 40s. per annum will be paid for each pupil teacher instructed, independently of the results of examination. Thus the total amount to be paid under the new system is the same as under the old, but will be equally divided. No school can for an ordinary pupil teacher receive under the new system a lower grant than it would have received under the old until after July 1st, 1903.

THE BLOCK GRANT AND HIGHER GRADE SCHOOLS.

SIR WILLIAM CODDINGTON (Blackburn): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether the Government purpose taking steps to protect financially the higher grade and other elementary schools whose income may be diminished by the limitation of the block grant as proposed in the new Code of regulations for day schools.

SIR J. GORST: The reduction of the income of the higher grade schools under the Code will not be considerable, and no school can have its income diminished by reason of the new Code till the year 1891-2. In the meanwhile expedients will without doubt be devised by which the efficiency of these schools will be protected.

SUGGESTED POSTPONEMENT OF THE CHANGES IN THE CODE.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the memorandum on the new Code drawn up by the Association of School Boards, and to the request made by the association that the drastic changes so hastily put before the country should be postponed for twelve months, on the ground that the new Board of Education is coming into immediate existence, with special powers for dealing with the whole problem of National Education; and whether, having regard to this appeal and to the representations of many of the school boards of the large towns that the education given in their schools will be injured by the grave diminution of the grants hitherto earned by many of their schools, Her Majesty's Government will consent to withdraw the changes complained of in the new Code, and allow the whole subject to be more fully considered.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the arrangement which had been come to with regard to to-night has fallen through, perhaps I may be permitted to state to-morrow what Parliamentary arrangements I will make in substitution for those we have abandoned.

CORONERS' INQUESTS IN WALES.

*MR. VAUGHAN DAVIES (Cardiganshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a statement by J. H. Evans, one of the coroners for Cardiganshire, in holding an inquest on one Margaret Ann Howell on the 12th instant, that if jurymen did not understand English they were not eligible to be on the jury, and to the fact that he gave instructions to the constable in charge of the case not to summon jurymen who did not understand English, and whether a person otherwise qualified to sit on a jury at a coroner's inquest in Wales is disqualified by ignorance of the English language; and, if so, under what statute; and whether a coroner has the power to give directions as to the composition of the jury at such inquest.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): So far as I am aware, ignorance of English is not a statutory disqualification for sitting on a coroner's jury in Wales, and the coroner to whom the question refers, and who is himself a Welshman, has never expressed himself in that sense. In the case referred to, medical evidence of special importance was given in English, and the inquisition, as the hon.

Member is no doubt aware, was drawn in English, and the coroner instructed the police that it would be better to summon jurors who understood English. This expression of opinion appears to me to be altogether in accord with common sense, and in no way inconsistent with the law.

CORONERS' INQUESTS—VIEWING BODIES.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in view of the fact that in 1898 or 1899 the replies received to circulars sent out by the secretary to coroners and their deputies showed that a considerable majority thought that an alteration in the law is advisable, that a coroner should retain the power of the view, but that the question as to whether the coroner, jury, or both should be relieved absolutely was left for further consideration, whether legislation will be undertaken by him somewhat in terms of the Coroners Bill, 1879, No. 243, Clause 5, by which a Select Committee of the House, to whom such Bill had been referred, intended to give coroners and jurymen the relief now asked for.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have made inquiry as to the replies referred to, but I find that there was no such decided or conclusive preponderance of opinion in favour of any definite change in the law as to afford a reason for proposing legislation of the kind suggested.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid): Did the replies come from the coroners themselves or from the Society of Coroners?

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: From the coroners themselves. There was a preponderance of opinion in favour of some change, but very great difference of opinion as to what change should be suggested.

CONVICTS' DIETARY REGULATIONS.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devonshire, Ashburton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the recommendations of the Dietary Committee, in regard to the diet of prisoners in Dartmoor and other convict prisons, have been carried out; and, if not, will he give this matter an early and favourable consideration.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have postponed the introduction of a new permanent dietary for convict and local prisons pending careful observation, which has been continued during the past year, upon the effect of the changes already introduced in the dietaries of local prisons. I hope shortly to be in a position to lay on the Table of the House new scales of dietary for both convict and local prisons, based upon the suggestions contained in the Report of the recent Dietary Committee.

SUNDAY LABOUR IN FACTORIES.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any precedents exist for the proposal contained in Sub-section (3) of Clause 33 of the Factories and Workshops Bill to legalise work for five hours on Sundays; and, if not, whether he can see his way to withdraw this proposal.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: There are several provisions in the Factory Acts under which it is possible for children, young persons, and women to work on Sundays. But even apart from precedent, I certainly cannot withdraw the proposal in Sub-clause (3) of Clause 33 of the Factory and Workshops Bill, which, I may explain, is required in the interest of the Irish Creameries, a new and important industry, where a limited amount of Sunday labour is, I believe, indispensable.

LUNACY LABORATORY RESEARCH.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what class of research it is intended shall be carried out in the laboratories which it is proposed may be provided and maintained in connection with lunacy in Clause 22 of the Lunacy Bill; what is the character of the certificates it is intended to grant to licensees at such laboratories; and whether the number of such laboratories are to be limited in number.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I have no information leading me to believe that the research for which the laboratories may be established will involve any necessity for either licences or certificates; but I am in communication with the Lunacy Commissioners on the subject.

FOOTBALL IN REGENT'S PARK AND PRIMROSE HILL.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that Regent's Park and Primrose Hill are closed to players in football matches on the last day of February in every year, while the open spaces under the control of the London County Council are available to such players up to 31st March; and whether he can cause the football period in the first-named open spaces to be extended to 31st March.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The ground on which football is played at Regent's Park and Primrose Hill is very stiff clay, and it becomes much cut up and the grass destroyed. The grass needs some time for restoration, and I am not prepared, therefore, to extend the football season in these Parks. More particularly as to Primrose Hill, I have to keep in view the fitness of the same ground for cricket.

ABERDEENSHIRE FISHERIES.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the recent wholesale migration of fishermen, particularly on the Aberdeenshire coast, the Government will take steps, by facilitating the system of harbour construction, by developing light railways, and by a stricter enforcement of the fishery laws and regulations, to restrain this continuous depletion of the country population.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Each of the three suggestions which the hon. Member makes has already engaged the attention of the Government, and to each some practical effect has already been given. But the Government are not prepared in answer to such a question as this to assume obligations of a wholly indefinite and unlimited nature.

NEW POST OFFICE FOR LIMERICK.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state what steps are being taken in reference to the building of a new post office in the city of Limerick.

MR. HANBURY: Measures are in progress for obtaining the additional ground required for the rebuilding of the head post office at Limerick.

CARRICKROE POSTAL DELAYS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury as representing the Postmaster General whether numerous complaints have been made respecting the delivery of the mails in the Carrickroe sub-post district, county Monaghan; whether he is aware that discontent prevails with the practice of a three-day delivery in the week in some townlands, and only a two-day delivery in the week in other townlands as conveniently situated to the post office; and whether, to prevent such dissatisfaction, the Department will equalise the delivery over this sub-post district.

MR. HANBURY: As the hon. Member was informed in answer to his question of the 27th of October last, the latest returns of the correspondence for the Carrickroe district showed that the present arrangements for the delivery of letters were the best practicable. Further inquiry will however, now be made, and the question of affording an improved service will again be considered.

LOUGH CORRIB DRAINAGE WORKS.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that frequent complaints have been made by millowners in Galway to the Commissioners of Public Works with regard to the failure of the Drainage Trustees to maintain the drainage and navigation works on Lough Corrib; that, in response to these complaints, an engineer was sent down to inspect the works, and reported to the effect that there is a considerable accumulation in the channel which should be removed by the Drainage Trustees; and if, in consequence of that report, the Commissioners communicated with the Trustees with the view of having this order carried out; and whether the Trustees have taken any steps to comply with the orders of the Commissioners of Public Works; and if he can state the amount of assessment levied on the locality for the maintenance of these works, and the amount expended by the Drainage Trustees in improvements and repairs.

MR. HANBURY: No complaint has been made as to the navigation works, which do not affect the mills, but other-

wise the statements in the first paragraph are substantially correct. The Trustees have given an assurance that immediate steps will be taken to remove the accumulation. The secretary to the Trustees states that, on an average, about £300 a year was spent by the Drainage Board on works of maintenance between 1895 and 1898, and that in 1899 over £600 was so spent. I have no information before me at present as to the amount of the assessment.

FAIR RENTS IN COUNTY LOUTH.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that hundreds of applications from tenants in the county of Louth to have fair rents fixed have been pending for over twelve months; and whether he can state when these cases will be disposed of by the sub-commissioners.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, S.): A list containing 192 cases from the County Louth is at present in course of disposal. The hearing of these cases was commenced at Drogheda on the 12th instant. The list contains all cases in which the applications were received in the office of the Land Commission prior to 1st April, 1899. Two hundred and fifty-eight additional applications which have been received from the County Louth since the latter date will be listed for hearing in due course.

RICHMOND LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the medical superintendent of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum, Doctor Connolly Norman, has issued his yearly report, in which he states that out-nursing of some of the inmates would be beneficial to them as well as beneficial to the ratepayers; and whether he will inquire into the suggestions made by Doctor Connolly Norman as to the out-nursing of lunatics which seems to work so well in Belgium, Germany, and other countries, for a long time past.

MR. ATKINSON: The fact is not quite as represented in the first paragraph of the question. What Dr. Norman in his report stated was, that if the Committee of Management are satisfied that a system of out-nursing would be advantageous, he has no doubt that such powers could be obtained as would permit of the carrying out of such arrangements as might commend themselves to the Committee as beneficial to the insane and economical to the ratepayers. I may point out that there is no power under the existing law to adopt the system of out-nursing, even if such a course were deemed advisable. The matter, however, is receiving the consideration of Government.

BELFAST PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION LECTURES.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a man calling himself "Ex-Monk Widdows" has lately been preaching and lecturing in Belfast, under the auspices of the Belfast Protestant Association; and that his real name is Nobbs; whether he was sentenced in Toronto, Canada, to five months imprisonment, and sentenced again in 1888 by Mr. Justice A. L. Smith to ten years penal servitude for an unmentionable crime; and whether, seeing Widdows, *alias* Nobbs, was never a monk, the Government will proceed against him for obtaining money under false pretences.

MR. ATKINSON: At the request of my right hon. friend I will reply to this question. I am aware that an individual calling himself ex-Monk Widdows has been recently delivering lectures in Belfast. I am unable to say whether he is an accredited agent of the Belfast Protestant Association, though I observe he has been associated on several occasions with Mr. Arthur Trew, who, I believe, is a prominent member of that body. It is a fact that Widdows was convicted and sentenced in 1888 for the crime mentioned, and though I have not been able to procure a copy of any conviction against him in Canada, I have no reason to doubt that he was convicted and sentenced in Toronto for a similar offence. There are some legal difficulties in the course suggested in the last paragraph of the question, but the matter has been placed in the hands of the police.

LAND SUB-COMMISSION SITTINGS IN COUNTY CORK.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork Co., S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many fair rent applications are

now awaiting hearing before the Land Commission from the Skibbereen, Drumanway, and Clonakilty Unions, when last a sitting of a Sub-Commission took place for those unions, and when the next sitting may be expected.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): There are one hundred and forty-nine applications to fix fair rents from the Union of Skibbereen, forty-three from the Union of Drumanway, and seventy-three from the Union of Clonakilty, that have not yet been listed for hearing. A Sub-Commission sat in these towns on July 6th, April 28th, and March 31st, 1899, respectively. Further sittings will be arranged for these districts at as early dates as possible, but such dates have not yet been fixed.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many fair rent applications are now awaiting hearing before the Land Commissioners from the Cork Poor Law Union, when last a sitting of the Sub-Commission for this union took place, and when the next sitting may be expected.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Ninety-eight applications to fix fair rents from the Union of Cork have not yet been listed for hearing. A Sub-Commission last sat in October, 1898, for the disposal of cases from that Union. A further list containing cases from the Union is at present in preparation, and will be taken up when the list for Kilmallock District, now in course of disposal, has been completed.

QUEEN'S COUNTY COUNCIL SECRETARY.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that inconvenience has arisen in the Queen's County owing to a contention raised by the secretary of the county council as to whether the notice given to him by that body under Section 115, Sub-section (5), of the Local Government Act was sufficient, the council being in the position that it is left in doubt whether the secretary is their officer or not; and whether he is aware that the official in question is over seventy years of age, and whether any steps can be taken to insure that the business of the county will be carried on by an officer whose legal status is undoubted.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I am not aware that any inconvenience, such as is suggested, has arisen. If the notice served upon the official referred to was insufficient the county council, through their own negligence in that respect, have themselves to blame. The point is one for decision in a court of law in some proceeding between the council and their officer, and is not a matter in which either the Irish Executive or the Local Government Board can interfere.

IRISH AGRICULTURAL GRANT.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether, owing to the construction placed by landlords upon the introductory words of Section 54 of the Local Government Act, occupiers holding under tenancies with March and September gale days are deprived of the benefit of that portion of the Agricultural Grant declared to be intended in relief of county cess for the half-year ending 29th September last, and also of the adjustment in respect of poor rate on buildings to which their liability to the whole poor rate equitably entitles them; and whether he will deal with this matter in the proposed amending Bill.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware whether landlords have generally adopted the construction referred to. The effect of such a construction would be as stated in the question. In reply to the second paragraph, I can only say that the necessity for any amendment of that law is under consideration.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, IRELAND—COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he is in a position to announce the names of the members of the Committee which he stated had been appointed to consider the teaching of the Royal College of Science in Ireland, and the building which will be required; and whether he can state what the terms of reference to the said Committee will be.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin

Co. S.): The names of the Committee appointed by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland are Sir William Abney, K.C.B., Chairman, the Secretary of the Department and the Assistant Secretary for Technical Instruction, the Commissioner of Valuation for Ireland, and Mr. S. E. Spring-Rice, C.B. The reference is as follows—

"To consider and report on the future position and functions of the Royal College of Science for Ireland with reference to technical instruction as related to industries and agriculture in that country; to report on the requirements of the college as regards staff and organisation; and to make recommendations as to the arrangement and nature of the new college buildings."

CHAPTER OF ST ALBANS.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury by what statutory or other authority a dean and chapter has been granted to St. Albans, and from what source the endowment for such chapter is to be derived; and whether the grant to St. Albans may be regarded as the precursor to similar grants in the case of the other sees constituted in recent years.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that a charter is to be granted, but there is no endowment in connection with it.

PRESS REPRESENTATIVES IN THE LOBBY.

*MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that a gentleman who is an accredited press representative in the Lobby of the House of Commons holds an official and salaried position in the London Record Office; and whether it is consistent with the rules of the public service that a gentleman holding a public position of this description should be permitted to act as an agent for the press. May I be permitted to state that the question has been so sub-edited that neither in form nor in phraseology is it mine, and this alteration has been made entirely without communication or consultation with me?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman still takes an interest in his question, but if he does I may inform him that the person to whom he refers does not occupy a salaried position, but he does certain work for the Record Office for which he is paid. No Department has any control over his time when not engaged on this work.

*MR. HAYDEN: May I ask if it is in the interest of the public service that an employee of a Government Department should be connected with the press in this manner?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. HAYDEN: I shall draw attention to this on the Estimates.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL.

MR. WARR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is able to say when the Marine Insurance Bill will be introduced.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This Bill will, I believe, be introduced in another place. It has not yet been introduced, and I am afraid I cannot give a definite answer to the specific inquiry my hon. friend makes.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can for the convenience of Members now state when it is proposed that the House should adjourn for and reassemble after Easter.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have been rather disappointed with the progress of public business. I had hoped that we should have advanced the Finance Bill further than we have, but I still hope that if we make reasonable progress in the business that still remains to be done we may be able to get away on Tuesday, April 10th, and in that case I shall give the House a fortnight and two days holiday, and not ask it to reassemble till Thursday, the 26th.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): What Estimates will be taken to-morrow?

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: And as to the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To-morrow we begin business by moving the Speaker out of the Chair, and, this being completed, we shall proceed with the Estimates in their order. Perhaps, being on my feet, I may say that I am rather disappointed in my anticipation, and must somewhat depart from the arrangements for next week. I

held out a hope to Scotch Members that as the first Order for Monday we would take the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill, and go on with other Scotch matters, but I find that a stage of the Finance Bill must be taken on each day next week. As a matter of fact, the Report stage must be taken on Monday. I do not suppose it will take any length of time, but the Ecclesiastical Assessments will be the second Order. On Tuesday I must ask the House to take a stage of the Finance Bill first.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): What are the various stages of the Finance Bill that will be taken?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: On Monday we take the Report. On Tuesday I have to move the Speaker out of the Chair for a Resolution of the House in Committee of Ways and Means for insertion of certain clauses. Then must follow on subsequent days the recommittal of the Bill, the insertion of these clauses, and the Third Reading of the Bill on Friday.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will there be a morning sitting on Tuesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): Is it proposed to interfere with the debate on the Indian famine?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the Government business for that day need take long. It need not displace the hon. Member's motion if the House will treat the business of the Finance Bill as formal business.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): When will the Sea Fisheries Bill be taken? Will it be brought on at a time to admit of its being discussed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consult my right hon. friend in charge of the Bill. I do not think there is much chance of its being taken to-night or on Monday.

MONEY LENDING BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 156.]

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 157.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to Youthful Offenders; and for other purposes connected therewith." Youthful Offenders Bill [Lords]

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, to increase the number of Magistrates in the Burgh of Leith." Leith Burgh Provisional Order Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend in certain respects the Acts relating to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board; and for other purposes." Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for empowering the Governments Stocks and other Securities Investment Company, Limited, to increase the dividend upon its preferred ordinary stock; and to amend The Governments Stock Investment Company, Limited, Act, 1887." Governments Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords].

Lee Conservancy Bill.—That they give leave to the Lord Russell of Killowen to attend in order to his being examined as a witness before the Select Committee appointed by this House on the Lee Conservancy Bill; his Lordship consenting.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD BILS [Lords].

GOVERNMENT STOCK AND OTHER SECURITIES INVESTMENT COMPANY BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LEITH BURGH PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 158.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) in the Chair.]

New clause—

"(1) If any manufacturer of tobacco shall have in his custody or possession fit for sale,

or shall tender for drawback, or if any dealer in or retailer of tobacco shall have in his custody or possession any tobacco containing a greater proportion of oil than 3 per cent., he shall incur an excise penalty of £50, and the tobacco shall be forfeited.

(2) The expression 'oil' in this section includes any substance of a fatty or oily nature which may be present in tobacco, and the expression 'fit for sale' shall, as respects roll or cut tobacco, have the meaning assigned to it by Section 4 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1887.

(3) In computing the amount of moisture in one hundred pounds of tobacco for the purposes of that part of Section 1 of the Manufactured Tobacco Act, 1863 (as amended by subsequent Acts), which deals with the calculation of moisture for drawback, any fraction of a pound of moisture—

(*a*) if it is over any number of entire pounds less than fourteen, shall be treated as an entire pound, and

(*b*) if it is over fourteen entire pounds, or any number of entire pounds exceeding fourteen, shall be disregarded;

and the quantity of dry tobacco shall be treated as diminished or increased accordingly.

This sub-section shall not apply to snuff."

—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

SIR J. A. WILLOX (Liverpool, Everton) appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reconsider this proposal. For the first time and without notice the right hon. Gentleman was introducing a penalty on manufacturers of tobacco, by making the proposal contained in the clause.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I thought when I placed this clause upon the paper that it would be a great advantage to the trade. I know the acquaintance which the hon. Member has with the subject, and if he desires further consideration of the clause I will not press it now.

Clause (by leave) withdrawn.

New clause—

"The duty to be paid on goods or commodities deposited in a customs or excise warehouse is hereby declared to be the duty chargeable at the date of the actual removal of those goods or commodities from the warehouse, and if before that date any sums shall have been paid in respect of duty, the difference (if any) between the sums so paid and the actual duty chargeable shall be paid or repaid, as the case may be." (*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)—

brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I should like an explanation of this clause.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I shall be very happy to explain. This clause is intended to prevent the very unseemly thing that occurred on the 3rd and 5th of March at the Customs House. At present the mode of effecting clearances on dutiable goods is that persons come to the Customs House with a cheque, and on receipt of the cheque the goods are cleared. Hon. Members are aware of the manner in which this method of proceeding was taken advantage of for the purpose of forestalling the duties on the 3rd and 5th of March. I propose that the time of the clearance of goods shall be interpreted as that of their actual removal from the bonded warehouse. This will tend in another way to ensure the observance of the law, because goods should not be allowed to remain long in bond after the duty has been paid.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I hope this matter will receive just a little more consideration. The House probably concluded from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's remarks that these are Government warehouses, in which these goods were stored. They are not warehouses belonging to the Government, they are private warehouses and if these are all made subject to this drastic proposal a great blow will be given to the warehouse system. Before the present Budget we had an opinion expressed by the Treasury about this matter of keeping goods in warehouse after the duty has been paid. It arose in connection with the Budget and in connection with one of these bonds it was asked whether there was the right to retain the goods in the warehouse. I think the Treasury—I do not say the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for it—expressed the opinion that there was no such right. That expression of opinion created amongst the proprietors of these warehouses something like dismay. Warehousing is a great business in London. I say, with great deference to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opinion, that by this proposal a great additional difficulty will be thrown on this important business. I don't think

that we should lightly increase the difficulties with which the business is carried on. A great deal has been said about the unseemly proceedings at the Customs House on the 3rd and 5th of March, but that was because the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman was rushed in the most extraordinary way this year. There was no reason why it should have been rushed and I think if this Budget had been taken at the proper time there would have been no ground for the complaints made. This is a most extraordinary clause. It seems to me a very clumsy way of meeting the difficulty which I do not believe in myself. I believe it will cause a great deal more difficulty in connection with business than the right hon. Gentleman thinks.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I think the proposal of this clause will give general satisfaction. The fact that in two days upwards of two millions and a quarter of money was rushed into the Customs for the clearance of goods in bond clearly requires that some attention should be paid to this subject by the Treasury, because whatever may be said about it the object of that sudden and large payment of duty was to take advantage of the position of affairs and practically diminish the revenue of the subsequent year. It will be a great thing that in all such matters the commercial interests shall be put on the same footing. That will be accomplished by this clause, and I think if any practical difficulty is found in the working of it the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or his successors, will endeavour to remedy the difficulty. It will have the effect of remedying what happened this year, and that is very desirable.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I hope the Government will succeed in preventing what has been complained of with respect to clearances. Nothing can be more injurious to our finance than the taking of 2,000,000 out of a year when you want it and putting it into another when you do not want it. My hon. friend says the Budget was rushed and that it led to these proceedings. The fact is exactly the reverse, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said. These proceedings were the cause which compelled him to bring on the Budget at the time he did. These are what you may call in a certain sense gambling transactions. They are speculations on the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and they ought not to be encouraged. I hope this will help to prevent such transactions in future.

*MR. LOUGH: It appears that there is some misunderstanding on the question from the two short speeches we have heard. This two millions and a half of revenue has been spoken of as if all this money had been put into somebody's pocket. It is a great mistake, as will be seen if the House will only think for a moment. Take spirits—it is only 5 per cent. of the two millions and a half. In the case of tobacco you must take the proportion at one-twelfth. You will see that quite an undue fuss was made about the transactions. There is another point. The trade is constantly changing, and I am sorry that Chancellors of the Exchequer are not, perhaps, as familiar with the details of it as they ought to be, or some of the provisions of the Budget would not appear as they are. A great change has taken place in this country lately, and goods are dealt with in different ways. Large contracts are made for goods duty paid, and they are made a long time in advance. The vast majority of them, as far as I know, were merely acts done by agents for clients they had. I do say that if we have this very clumsy way of collecting the revenue, we ought to remember the situation of the traders when making those violent plunges which seem to me to do a great deal of harm to business. The Chancellor can take off a duty as suddenly, and I cannot recall a case in which great loss did not fall on the holders of stock throughout the country when duty was taken off. I believe we will have to find a much less drastic clause than this, and one better suited to the trade. If others felt as I feel about it I would oppose the clause, but I will not do so. All I want is to get the best system for the collection of the revenue, and to see that some protection is given to traders when duties are taken off.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I should like to read a few sentences from a circular that has been put into my hands—

"On Friday, 2nd March, notice was given that the Budget would be presented on Monday, 5th March. Deeming this to foreshadow a sharp increase in taxation, holders

of dutiable merchandise spent the interval in paying duty and arranging for clearance. Tea traders were particularly busy, and before 3.30 p.m. on the 5th they paid duty on twenty-three million pounds, bringing up the total since 1st January to forty-three million pounds in excess of the usual quantity, Allowing £1,400,000 for tea and £700,000 for duty, these operations have involved an outlay of £2,100,000, together with the expense of finding storage room for some 450,000 packages entailed by the new order to remove duty-paid goods 'forthwith' from the bonded warehouses. Buyers were in consequence so preoccupied that it was needful to close the market last week, and give the trade time to recover from their exertions, and to accomodate themselves to the new condition of the sixpenny duty imposed on the 6th March. Distributors at once raised their prices, and have thus secured the greater part of the £350,000, which is the difference between duty at 4d., and at 6d. on forty-three million pound weight of tea."

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause added.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): The object of the clause I now beg to move is, I think, apparent to everybody, and it certainly expresses the opinion of most members of this Committee. It is not a new idea. It has not grown out of the present war entirely. In 1894 I moved a similar amendment of the Finance Act following the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire.* Surely those who go and fight our battles should not be taxed in the same way as others. There are some advantages already granted to soldiers and sailors who die in the service of the Crown. Their estates are exempt from certain stamp duties. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very sympathetic on this matter when I moved the same clause, or a practically similar clause, in 1894. He spoke in favour of it and said it should be regarded with a sympathetic feeling by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am glad to think that he now somewhat agrees with that, and I am very hopeful that he will assent to this proposal. I have included in my Amendment other forces of the Crown, besides the Army and Navy, so as to cover the case of any persons killed in heroic action in the field. I think they should be included, but I believe the right hon. Gentleman has not taken a sympathetic view of this as he does in the case of those who die in the service of the Crown. In his speech in 1894 he drew a distinction between those two classes of heroes, and although I regret it, I cannot persist in that part of the resolution if he insists on excluding it. I give the Treasury absolute discretion to settle each case coming under the purview of this clause, if he will agree to extend it to heroic acts done in civil life as well as military life. I do not press the special wording of my clause. All I want is that the country should not derive any benefit from those unfortunate incidents that lead to our soldiers and sailors being killed in warfare. The limit of £5,000 excludes all persons of large means. I think the common feeling of justice requires that we should exempt them from this heavy tax. The question has been discussed a good deal in public, and I am sure the great bulk of the House agrees with my proposal.

New clause—

"Estate duty shall not be payable on an estate the principal value of which does not exceed five thousand pounds in the case of any person killed, or dying within twelve months from the effect of any wound received, in the performance of his duty in the Navy, the Army, or other forces of the Crown. The date from which this exemption may be claimed shall be the twelfth day of October one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine. The Treasury may, if they think fit, authorise the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to remit the death duties in any case of an estate the principal value of which does not exceed five thousand pounds, when the person loses his life in the performance of some heroic act of saving or attempting to save another person or persons from danger, disease, or accident."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

—brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): I rise to support this very heartily. Do I understand that the clause applies only to the estates of men who are killed or who die from the effect of any wound received? I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if he admits that principle to be just, as I sincerely trust he will, does he not consider that a man who dies of disease should also be included in the clause. There is another point I wish to put before the right hon. Gentleman in

* See Debate in Committee on the Finance Bill, 9th July, 1894. (*The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxvi., page 1249.)

this connection which I think worthy of consideration. There are a certain number of men called up and not sent on extra service at once. They are kept at the depots. I have known cases of men who died before they actually got to the seat of war, and I do think they are entitled to the same consideration. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot provide for them in the Bill, I do hope that those who die from disease will receive consideration.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I oppose this on the ground that it belongs to a class of proposals most vicious and objectionable in principle—the extending of relief by exemption from taxation. It is a method which popularity hunters and gentlemen who wish to make themselves agreeable eagerly grasp at. Instead of coming out manfully and squarely and openly, you give a remission of taxation, and a remission of taxation is precisely the same thing as the giving of grants. The straight and honest way would be to make up your minds what you are going to do for these people, and vote the money and let it appear on the face of the Estimates. I will state three objections which appear to me to be of enormous weight against the particular proposal we are asked to consider. The first objection appears to be so strong as to be absolutely fatal if we were living in times when the voice of reason would be heard inside and outside of this House on the question of the war, but of course we are not. What is the proposal before us?

"Estate duty shall not be payable on an estate the principal value of which does not exceed five thousand pounds in the case of any person killed, or dying within twelve months from the effect of any wound received, in the performance of his duty in the Navy, the Army, or other forces of the Crown."

In other words, a grant of money shall be given to the heirs of everybody dying from wounds sustained in the course of the present war. That grant is to be calculated on the most stupid and the most monstrous principle that could be possibly devised by human ingenuity. The richer a man is the larger will be the grant. If an officer who has performed prodigies of valour, and is wounded, afterwards returns to the ranks, as many of them have done, and distinguishes himself in every way, if he is killed, and leaves to his unfortunate widow and family £500, £100, or no pounds at all, under this ingenious clause the family get nothing at all. But if he leaves £5,000 then the family get £100. Was there ever put before the House so monstrous a doctrine? If a man, taken as a prisoner to Pretoria at an early stage of the war, dies there from a small wound he may have received, leaving £5,000, his family is to get a present of £100 or £150—I have not calculated the exact amount—while the family of an officer who has fought all through the war, and has no real estate, is under this ingenious and magnificent clause to get nothing at all. Was there ever such a proposal made to the House of Commons? Because this proposal is in favour of the war it has the effect on hon. Members of making them say "shovel out this money" without considering whether it is to do good or harm. The more you examine the proposal the more insane and monstrous it appears. One man has £1,000 to leave to his widow and family. They get a trifle of £40 or £50 under this clause, and another man who has no wife and no family leaves his property to an elder brother, who benefits by this proposal to the extent of £300 or £400. Is not that grotesque? Many of the officers who are being killed are unmarried, and under this ingenious clause you are making a present of £50 or £100 of the taxpayers' money to wealthy men in England who want no relief whatever. This is going to be done by the British House of Commons when thousands of the widows and families of your soldiers will be starving after this war is over. [Cries of "No!"] They are starving already. [Cries of "No!" and "Name!"] I say they are. I will do better than give names. I have received a circular appealing to me as an Irish Member, and pointing out the wretched condition of the wives and families of the soldiers. There are many poor families of soldiers who have no real estate to leave, and whose little belongings cannot come under the purview of this clause There will be many families in want, and you will require large sums of money. I am sure I won't oppose any Vote you propose for any of the soldiers. I think the families of the soldiers are treated in this country with too little generosity. Is it not a monstrous thing, at this stage of the war, before we have any information as to what the Government are going to propose for the families of

the common soldiers, to bring forward a proposal of this kind, which in its very essence is unjust? It is calculated to give the greater relief the greater the amount of property a man leaves. There are many of your officers who have no property at all. No more grotesque and monstrous and insane proposal was ever placed before the House of Commons. I do trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer will consider the matter for a moment before he commits himself to it.

*MR. BUTCHER (York): I am not surprised that the hon. Member has strongly opposed this proposal. Any proposal with which he does not absolutely agree is always monstrous and insane. There was one part of the speech of the hon. Member with which I found myself able to agree, and that was when he referred to the wives and families of soldiers killed in action. I am glad to think that there is already some provision made for the widows and children of our soldiers killed in action. The Government have taken an important step in ordering an inquiry into the administration of the Patriotic Fund, which exists for that very purpose, in order to ensure that it shall be worked in the best possible manner. We have also the satisfaction of knowing that the country has responded generously to the appeals made to them for the support of the widows and children of those who have met their death in the service of the State. If these funds are not sufficient, I would gladly welcome any proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide additional money for so absolutely legitimate an object. On the general merits of this proposal I would say that, *prima facie*, it does seem an unreasonable thing that if a man prematurely meets his death in the service of the State, the State should immediately seize that opportunity of levying a tax on those he leaves behind him. The exemptions from duty upon estates of persons killed in action are mainly two. One of them provides that if an officer is killed in action and has an estate under £100, the State shall not levy any duty upon that property. The other exemption is to the effect that if a common soldier, seaman or marine is killed in action no estate duty shall be levied upon his property. That is a reasonable exemption, but it is open to two objections. One objection is that it does not apply to non-commissioned officers. Another objection is that at the present moment there are men of large property serving in South Africa as common soldiers, and if they are unfortunately killed in action their estates would be exempted altogether. I am glad to think that men who have large properties have gone out, and all praise and all credit to them for having gone out, to serve their country as common soldiers, but there is no reason why these large estates should be exempted from duty. My hon. friend who moved the clause has limited its application to estates of £5,000 and under. I have to propose another limitation, and that is that the exemption should only apply where the £5,000 or less goes to the widow or children of the man who is killed. I agree with the criticism of the hon. Member who has just sat down that, if the property goes to a collateral or more distant relative, or no relative at all, there is no ground for exemption in that case. If, however, you exempt from duty a comparatively small sum which goes to the widow and children of the man who is killed, then I say you have a proposition reasonable in itself and one which I think the great majority of the House will be prepared to accept. The clause moved by my hon. friend the Member for North Islington makes no provision for those who die from disease contracted on active service. That is a case in which I think it will be very difficult to make definite provision by Act of Parliament. It seems to me you must give a certain discretion to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and my proposal is that the Commissioners may extend the provision of exemption to cases of death from disease where the circumstances are such as to warrant the adoption of that course. I think you may be perfectly satisfied that the discretion will be exercised in a proper manner. I heartily support the general view embodied in the new clause of my hon. friend, but I would suggest that it should be amended in the way I propose.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I think the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo surprised some on this side of the House, because the Irish Members for a week have been asking exemptions. Now the hon. Member argues that all exemptions are to be condemned. I should have expected the sympathy of the hon. Members from

Ireland, rather than opposition. The hon. Member said that the richer the man killed the larger would be the exemption. I should hardly say that a man who only leaves £5,000 to his widow and children comes under the designation of a very rich man.

MR. DILLON: I only called him rich in comparison with a man who left nothing at all.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: That does not make any reason why we should not have some sympathy for the man who leaves a little. I hope the Committee will deal with this matter on reasonable lines. The reason the limit of £5,000 is fixed upon is that a large number of the poorer officers in the Army make provision for death, whether on active service or not, by paying out of their scanty income a small monthly sum to regimental or other societies. On their death annuities are paid to the widows. I happen to have in my mind the case of the Royal Artillery Widows' Society. In that particular society the officers put by out of their pay so much a month in order that on their death the society shall pay to their widows an annuity. In that case, supposing the widow to be twenty-five years of age and the annuity to be worth £200 a year, the value would be between £4,000 and £5,000. Under the Death Duties Act such a widow would be asked to pay a lump sum of money which she does not possess. What, no doubt, was in the minds of the Committee when they first heard of this sum of £5,000 was simply the case of a man who leaves £5,000 in cash. In this case there is no cash at all, but merely an annuity, which is valued for the purposes of the death duties at something under £5,000, and on which the widow would have to pay a lump sum. In such a case the money has never belonged to the person. Does that man come under the hon. Member's designation of a rich man? Do we not constantly hear Members on either side of the House asking the Government to encourage thrift? What can be more thrifty or more desirable than an action of this kind, by which a man provides for his widow and children? So desirable is it that a case has been placed in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, quite apart from this question of active service, to see whether he could not make some special provision to lighten the burden on these widows in connection with the Royal Artillery Widows' Society. They would, however, receive great benefit by the passing of this clause, and it would deal with the cases, at any rate, of officers who were killed in action or who died on active service. I quite allow you must draw the line somewhere, and it may be said that there is really no difference in the case whether a man is killed on active service or dies an ordinary death. But I think there is a very great difference. A man who dies an ordinary death in time of peace, whether he be a common soldier or an officer, takes no more risk than an ordinary member of the population, and there is no reason why a special exemption should be made in his case. But when on active service it is entirely different. The man is employed by the country, and it is his trade to take imminent risk of death. But that the country in whose service he was taking that risk should on his death exact a heavy penalty from his widow and children is most unreasonable and unjust. I quite agree that the exemption should be confined to the widow and children. I put this forward quite apart from any question of grants. Give them a grant as well if you like. Considering that the common soldier and the officer are laying down their lives side by side in South Africa, I think the endeavour to set up the case of the former against the case of the latter is unworthy of the House of Commons.

MR. DILLON: I said that both ought to be treated justly.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: I am afraid the hon. Member's idea of justice is very different from mine. His idea of justice is that because a soldier in the ranks is probably not in a position to make a provision of £5,000 for his widow and children, who in his life-time would not expect any such sum, therefore we are to make no recognition whatever of an officer who is leaving for his widow and children, who have been brought up in a different rank of life, a provision as barely sufficient to maintain their position as the small provision the man in the ranks might have been able to make for his dependants. I think the hon. Member has entirely failed to make out any case

against this clause, and I venture to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take the matter into his most favourable consideration. All these clauses may really be dealt with together, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider the point in the proposal which stands in my name. I have included every person subject to military or naval law under the Army Act, or the Navy Discipline Act, thereby bringing in the member of the auxiliary forces as well as the regular soldier. The clause brings the matter into consonance with the terms of the Army Act, and is therefore wider and more workable. It includes also deaths from disease or any other cause while on active service. With regard to the case of persons who may die possessed of more than £5,000, I do not press that part of the clause if the right hon. Gentleman does not feel himself able to grant it, but I think it is worthy of consideration. I think the House may fairly be asked to make this concession without it being accused of passing legislation induced by sentiment —other than proper and reasonable sentiment; and not only now we are at war, but when the war is over, the House will feel that it has done what is right, and this decision will stand as a good action for all time.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I take it for granted that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to give favourable consideration to this proposal he will certainly embody the limitation suggested by the hon. and learned Member for York. At the same time, I think it right to remind the right hon. Gentleman that he cannot accept this proposal without being in a position to guarantee to the House that the widow and orphans of the common soldier or sailor should have some equal compensation in their case.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: They are exempt already.

MR. BROADHURST: They are exempt because they have no real estate or fortune in the funds or in the bank. It would be manifestly unfair to enact a special exemption in the case of the officer, without some special and corresponding advantage being given to the common soldier or sailor.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH was understood to assent.

MR. BROADHURST: The Chancellor of the Exchequer agrees, and surely the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division will accept the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as one worthy of consideration. He shakes his head and says the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman is not worthy of consideration.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: My gesture was only intended to imply that I thought officers and men should be treated alike.

MR. BROADHURST: That is exactly the point I am raising, and thereon I agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. My reason for rising was that I could not imagine that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be caught napping in the manner suggested by these Amendments, and be induced to give special advantages to certain members of the Army.

MR. BARTLEY: No one proposed to do so.

MR. BROADHURST: This will be an advantage to the widows and orphans of officers killed or dying in connection with this war, and I suggest that the right hon. Gentleman cannot allow this to pass without some assurance that the widows and children of the rank and file, who have no real estate to leave, who have no fortunes of any kind, should be provided by the State with some corresponding advantage. Surely that is only even justice. I hope the House will not say that the soldier of the rank and file who gives his life for his country is not equally with his officer entitled to the consideration of the State. The hon. and learned Member for York referred to the fact that the widows and children of the soldiers killed at the front are being largely provided for out of charitable funds collected by and from the public. But that is a very unsatisfactory condition of things. There is a limit to the charitable resources of this country, and that provision might cease at any moment. Apart from that, I hold that the State is responsible, and that the widows and children should be provided for wholly and liberally by the State, and that they should not have to depend on the Lady Bountiful who distributes parish or district public funds. We are drifting to-night into an entirely new channel of public provision. This is a matter which

cannot stop at this present motion, if carried. There are a number of dangerous employments other than war. The Government itself is introducing a Railway Accidents Bill which has reference to a dangerous employment. The loss of life and limb in connection with the railway service is enormous and is a matter for grave consideration. The miners, too, are subjected to enormous risks. There is not a miner who leaves his home in the morning who has any considerable guarantee that he will return whole and sound to his family at night. I will not attempt to exhaust the list of dangerous employments; I will only mention one other—that of seamen. Look at the hundreds of fishermen's lives which are lost in the course of a year. These are all dangerous employments, from the exercise of which the State as well as the community gains great advantages. If you legislate for one class of dangerous employment you must legislate for the others. You cannot make preferential provision by Act of Parliament for one particular section of the community. I would repeat that I am not necessarily speaking against the motion if it is limited in the manner which has been suggested——

MR. BARTLEY: It sounds rather like it.

MR. BROADHURST: I hope the hon. Member for North Islington will curb his bombardment of objectionable interruptions with which he has been so free of late. Surely this is a reasonable and just view to bring under the notice of those who are responsible for Treasury expenditure and those who are responsible to the country for Government measures. The hon. Member for North Islington is not responsible for those measures. [AN HON. MEMBER: Not yet.] That is one of the misfortunes——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. BROADHURST: I might have ended in a complimentary manner to the hon. Member, but I will leave the subject. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give his best consideration to the points I have brought under his notice, and that if this motion is agreed to he will see that corresponding advantages are given to the rank and file.

MR. LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): I wish to associate myself fully with and to join in the appeal which has been made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to incorporate this Amendment in one form or another into the Bill. It seems to me that it is enough for a man to have laid down his life for his country and for his family to have given to the service of the nation that which was most valuable to them, without their being called upon to make a further sacrifice in the shape of this duty on the little property he has left behind him. It appears to me that this applies to any soldier of whatever rank he may be, and that the hon. Gentleman opposite is quite under a delusion in thinking the clause applies only to officers. If the hon. Member desires to give some special bounty to the family of the common soldier, the proper course is for him to propose to confer such a grant. But the present is not the proper occasion on which to do that, because we are not discussing the question of conferring grants upon anyone. The question before the Committee is whether the property of a deceased soldier up to a certain amount should be exempted from duty, which is a very different question. I think if this principle is once admitted, there is a great deal to be said in favour of exempting such property, whatever its value, from the duty. At the same time, I entirely agree that it would be wiser under all the circumstances to limit the scope of this clause so that it will apply only to cases in which the value of the property is under £5,000. I think it is wise so to limit the clause, because in the case of large estates the burden of having to pay the duty would be comparatively small, and, therefore, the hardship would be proportionately less. It is also wise to confine it to the widow and lineal descendants of the deceased soldier, because in the case of those in a more remote degree of relationship they would not, like the nearer relatives, be dependent for their maintenance and support upon the property which descended to them. Moreover, the burden which would be cast upon the national exchequer by the exemption being limited in this way would be a mere flea-bite compared with what it would be if the duty were remitted on all estates, without reference to value or those to whom the property descended. The proposal is a very moderate and reasonable one, and the exemption might be conceded without

imposing any appreciable burden upon the public funds. Indeed, it is only at an exceptional time like the present that it would impose anything worth calling a burden at all upon the general body of the taxpayers; but I am sure that any little sacrifice it might involve on their part would be most readily and cheerfully borne, seeing that it would constitute a just and fitting, but a very small, recognition of the splendid gallantry and self-sacrificing patriotism and devotion which have been invariably displayed by our soldiers and sailors throughout the whole of the present war.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: These questions of exemptions are always difficult and sometimes invidious. There is one thing which I think the House of Commons cannot be too careful of, and that is to remember that the grant of an exemption is practically a grant to the person in whose favour the exemption is made, at the expense of all the other taxpayers. That view, I think, is taken in the alternative amendment dealing with the same subject as that now under discussion which the hon. Member for King's Lynn has placed on the paper. The hon. Member for Leicester alluded to cases of heroism ending in death on the part of miners and other persons engaged in private employment. I do not think it is quite fair to put persons of that kind on the same footing as soldiers and sailors who devote their lives to the service of their country in time of war. I may say that, as a matter of fact, Parliament has not taken that view. I think the hon. Member for East Mayo in discussing this question has not quite recollected that there is at present an Act of Parliament in force which does confer an exemption of this kind upon common soldiers, seamen, and marines. For the last hundred years, ever since the time of the great French war, that Act has existed, and it is the fact, I believe, that at the present time if a person in any one of those three positions dies, leaving property to the amount of a million behind him, that property would not be subject to estate duty. But if such a person is an officer that Act does not apply. Is that equal treatment of officers and soldiers? No; it is not. After all, it must be recollected that in the case of the widows, and I believe of the children, of officers who are killed in action, Parliament does provide grants to aid them in their necessities. I do not think it is quite fair to argue that grants of that kind are on the same footing as exemptions from a tax which is levied on the property a person may happen to leave behind him. The two things do not seem to me to stand in exactly the same position. That is the present state of the law. There is an exemption from taxation of this kind in favour of common soldiers and sailors. At the present moment there are to my knowledge serving in Africa, in the position of privates in some of the forces, persons having means far in excess of the bulk of officers. The position is that the estates of such men losing their lives in the military operations will be free from estate duty, while the widows and children of officers serving by their side, who may be left with only a few hundred pounds, will have to pay duty. That is not fair, and the question arises how to deal with the matter. I cannot agree to the clause of the hon. Member for North Islington, because it exempts others than widows and children of officers, nor can I accept the clauses standing in the names of the hon. and learned Member for York and the hon. and gallant Member for the Woodbridge Division, because they deal with property beyond the limit of £5,000. I will not at the present moment express any definite opinion as to what the limit of exemption should be, but £5,000, I am sure, is as high as it ought to be put. I have been in communication with my noble friend the Secretary of State for War on the subject, because it has occurred to me that it may be possible to achieve the same end by some system of increased grants to the widows and children of officers who might be killed in the war, and if that is possible I should prefer to assist them upon that basis. I cannot say at the moment whether such a system can be devised or not. If it cannot, then, after the opinions which have been expressed, I am sure it will be the general view of the House that something else should be done. I will myself prepare a clause, and move it at the proper time, if a clause is necessary. The matter requires further consideration, and I would prefer to deal with it myself.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I feel quite confident no hon. Member would object to such a

clause as has been suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it is confined to a compassionate allowance in the case of the widow of an officer who, in consequence of the alteration in the death duties, has been left not so well off as before. I feel the strongest objection to the alternative which hon. Members who have spoken have suggested, because it will be very unequal and unjust if carried out, and it would benefit unequally certain persons and not others who are equally deserving. I wish to put this point to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the subject of exemption. The question of a compassionate allowance is a different case, because the War Office would deal with each individual case in proportion to the distress involved. But supposing the alternative proposal is accepted, this anomaly will then arise. Nobody objects to the death duties as such. Suppose an officer dies a few years earlier than he would otherwise have done under the ordinary operations of nature. It is not fair that an officer of sixty years of age should receive the same allowance as an officer who is killed at the age of forty. You propose that the estate of an officer who dies at forty is not to pay death duty on this particular sum, and the successor or the widow of an officer who dies at sixty years of age is also to be exempted. Surely the officer at forty has a much longer probability of life than the officer at sixty. I think you must put it on a fair basis in considering your compassionate allowance, and you should take into consideration how many years would probably have elapsed before the death duty would have had to be paid. I have no objection to these individual cases being dealt with upon their merits, but I should object very strongly to anything in the nature of an exemption from death duties through being killed on the field, because I think there are many other trades and occupations in which chances of sudden death are equal or even greater than those of an officer in the Army.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Not in the service of the State.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: One man may be sent to a climate where his life is injured at a much earlier period than it otherwise would be, and in cases of that kind exemption would be just as reasonable.

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

MR. BARTLEY: After the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer I shall be quite satisfied to leave the matter in his hands, and I will withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: I only wish to say that I accept what the Chancellor of the Exchequer has offered. Speaking for myself, I do not prefer the system of a compassionate grant. That appears to me to be a very offensive term to employ. I entirely dissent from the views expressed by the hon. Member for Poplar, and the niggling spirit in which he has treated this subject. To come here and make such a comparison between a man of sixty and a man of forty is nothing short of a scandal. It is one thing to relieve the savings of an officer of the payment of death duty, and quite another thing to make him a compassionate grant. I most strongly approve of the system of exempting the small savings left to the widow and children from taxation, instead of giving a compassionate grant just as if they were paupers. I desire to strongly impress upon the right hon. Gentleman—and I think my view will be shared by the hon. Member for York and a large majority of hon. Members on this side of the House—that we regret that he has not approached this question in a better spirit than it has been approached. All we ask is that the State should not take advantage of the death of a man in the service of the State to come down and demand the death duty upon the provision he had made for his widow and children. That is all we ask, and I think it ought to have been accepted in a better spirit. I beg to formally move the clause standing in my name.

New clause—

"Section 7, Sub-section 1, of the Finance Act, 1894, shall be construed as if there were added at the end thereof the following enactment:—

1. Where on the death of any person subject to military or naval law under the Army Act or the Naval Discipline Act when on active service (within the meaning of that expression as defined in the Army Act, and extended to a person subject to naval law or engaged in naval operations against the enemy), the principal value of the property passing on the death of such person to or in trust for his widow, or any lineal descendant of such person, shall not exceed five thousand pounds, no death duties (as defined in

Section 13, Sub-section 3, of the principal Act) shall be leviable in respect of such property, and where on the death of any such person the principal value of the property so passing shall exceed five thousand pounds in determining the value of the property so passing for the purpose of estate duty, an allowance of five thousand pounds shall be made and deducted from the value thereof, in respect of which five thousand pounds no such death duties as aforesaid shall be leviable.

2. Nothing in this section is to preclude any exemption from taking effect which would have been applicable if this section had not been enacted.

3. This section is to apply and have effect with respect to any death since the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine."—(*Captain Pretyman.*)

—brought up, and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I desire to associate myself with the views expressed by hon. Members on this side of the House with reference to these proposals. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk, in a rather heated speech, pleaded for a higher tone of debate on this question. I do not think you can have a higher tone in any debate than a demand for justice. No hon. Member on this side of the House has pleaded for anything more than justice, and I therefore submit that the "niggling policy" to which reference has been made does not exist in fact, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and my hon. friend the Member for Poplar put the case in its proper position. The "niggling policy" referred to is neither more nor less than a desire to secure equality, and I venture to submit that the Amendment now before us would not secure equality. The hon. Member would have us believe that he is more concerned about the widows and orphans of these officers than we are who think his Amendment unjust and unequal. According to the Amendment it would be possible if an officer left an estate worth £5,000 that it would be exempted from death duties.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: I have withdrawn that.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman did not explain that to me. The whole clause has been put from the chair.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: Perhaps I went too far in saying that I had withdrawn it. I mean that I do not wish to press it.

MR. MADDISON: I understood that the whole clause was before us, but evidently the hon. Gentleman is endeavouring to give it a decent appearance by dropping some of the cargo overboard. I will confine myself to the substantial part of the Amendment. The inequality would work out in this way. In case an officer left £5,000, no death duty would be payable, but his widow may have £5,000 or £10,000 in her own name, whereas another officer's widow may not have anything in her own right at all. The inequality would arise as between officer and officer, and the Treasury could not differentiate in a case like that. There is also an inequality as between officers and men. I am perfectly well aware of the law relating to men serving in the ranks, and that law is often used as an argument in favour of the wretched pay given to private soldiers. At any rate, the law which was passed at the beginning of the present or the end of last century was in keeping with justice, because it made a distinction between officers and men. I desire to support very heartily the proposal that if anything is done in this direction it should be by way of compassionate allowances. It has been assumed that we on this side of the House are indifferent to the splendid bravery of our officers equally with the bravery of our men. Although it has been displayed in what we believe to be an unjust and unnecessary war, we naturally realise that a man can serve his country in fighting in a cause on the merits of which we differ. The soldier does not enter into our controversies at all. We can recognise heroism either on our own side or the side of the enemy, and I protest against the idea that we have no regard for the bravery of our officers and men in South Africa. I do more. I protest against the idea that we are not willing to recompense the widows of the men who have died or the men themselves who will return in a crippled and mutilated condition. But I submit the proper way to do that is, as I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested, by way of compassionate allowances. What is the objection to them? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk used a

very significant phrase when he asked, "Do you want to pauperise the widows and orphans of these brave men who have died for their country?" That shows the old spirit of caste, because when the case of the private soldiers was first mentioned the hon. Member said they had been provided for by various charitable funds. You may pauperise the widow of the private soldier, but not the widow of the officer.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: It is a case of pauperising a person who has got something. You cannot pauperise a person who has nothing.

MR. MADDISON: I could not have imagined that any hon. Member of this House was so completely ignorant of the minds of the people of this country as to say that capacity for pauperism depends on the amount of money a man has, and that when he has nothing he cannot be pauperised. If the hon. Gentleman's language means anything it means that. In reply, I would ask if you do not pauperise a private soldier's widow by giving her money out of charitable funds, how can you pauperise an officer's widow who gets money direct from the War Office? With reference to soldiers of industry mentioned by my hon. friend the Member for Leicester, the right hon. Gentleman said they were not in the service of the State. Technically they may not be, but in whose service are the hundreds of thousands of miners, of railwaymen, and of seamen in this country? Do they not contribute their labour to the State? By this policy you differentiate between different kinds of service to the State, not by special grants, but by altering the system of taxation in favour of one class and not in favour of another. I say these proposals are proposals for grants of the worst kind, because you increase the amount in proportion to the wealth of the officer's widow, and I object, under the plea of patriotism, which just now covers a multitude of sins, to tampering with the taxation of the country. After all, what are these death duties? If the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not get the money in that form he would have to get it by other means. They are part and parcel of our system of taxation, and should not be interfered with, and I maintain that it is altogether wrong to attempt to alter our taxation by such an Amendment as that now before us. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk told us of officers who had insured their lives so that their widows would have a small annuity. He mentioned £200 a year, and he proceeded to say that in case that widow was called on to pay death duties she would not have the money to do it. That is no doubt a hard case, but it happens in thousands of instances in ordinary civil life. It is part and parcel of your system. You cannot cover every exception and you cannot make your laws suit every peculiar circumstances, and I ask why a widow who, unfortunately, loses her husband in the war should be treated differently from other widows. I am prepared to deal generously not only to the men, but the officers. I think it would be a burning shame and disgrace to this nation if we did not make proper allowances in every case where a man has lost a limb, or a wife her husband. There is no difference on that point between us on either side of the House. I venture to say that compensation in that direction must be put very high indeed. We are prepared to do all that is necessary, but not in the way suggested by this Amendment. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will resist all attempts to alter the definite system of taxation to suit a set of particular circumstances. The proper way to deal with exceptional circumstances is by exceptional measures, which will not in any sort of way make inequality with other people in civil life. For my own part I will resist any attempt in the direction of the Amendment now before the Committee, which, I think, is not justified on the grounds of justice or equality, and is impregnated with the vicious principle which seeks to set up a higher claim to consideration for one set of people who serve the State than another set of people. I venture to say that the time will come when we shall not hear so much of the military services of the State, but when we shall realise that civilians, like railway men and seamen, do their everyday duty in the face of difficulties and dangers not surpassed by those of soldiers in the field. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] Why, the shunters of England run greater risks than the troops who have been fighting the Boers during the last three or four months; and I venture to

say that the percentage of killed and wounded amongst shunters, in any one year during the last two decades, is greater, and the shunters stand more chance of losing life and limb than soldiers on active service. And yet if a shunter has saved, say, £200, through his building society, his widow would have to pay the death duties. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will stick to his sound system of finance and reject the Amendment.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: After the assurance given by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he himself will bring up a clause to deal with this matter, I beg leave to withdraw the Amendment. [HON. MEMBERS: No, no!]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I desire to speak on this clause, because it embodies in a very specific manner a suggestion which I make in regard to the death duties. No doubt the Committee and everybody else must feel the highest degree of sympathy with the man who loses his life in the service of the State, and must also feel that his wife and family have established a very special claim on the country. But let us consider whether the suggestions proposed are proper, and such as should be properly allowed. These suggestions can only really refer to officers; for the Committee will remember that every private soldier, every marine, every common seaman who loses his life in the service of the State is already exempt from death duty. [AN HON. MEMBER: No!] Every halfpenny of it; and therefore, if it were possible to conceive of a millionaire dying in the ranks in the service of Her Majesty in South Africa, the whole of his million would be exempt from death duty under the law as it stands. I do not know but that there may be millionaires in the ranks. There is certainly going to be a duke among the lieutenants, and therefore there may be an equally remarkable case in regard to privates. These three Amendments consequently touch exclusively officers. Let it be further understood by the Committee that in the case of every officer, both in the Army and Navy, dying in action, a very special pension is awarded to the widow—a pension that has been assumed to be adequate to the circumstances. If that pension is not adequate, then, in God's name, let it be increased; but let it be increased in the proper department of the Army and Navy. That is a proposal which no Member of the House would oppose. But it is an entirely different thing to make a special remission of general taxation in special circumstances, in the case of officers in the Army and Navy. Now, is that a proper thing to agree to? I confess that it has been my ambition always to attack the death duties; and I have resisted, as far as I could, the attempts of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to screw them up. But on this occasion I must rank myself on the side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the first place, if you are going to make a remission of the death duties on the ground that a man has lost his life in active service in the service of the State, why on active service alone? Those 300 men who went down in the "Victoria" lost their lives in the service of the State just as much as those who died in the field. There have been even men on these front benches who have given their lives in the service of this House and the country as truly as those soldiers and sailors in South Africa. I do not see how you can draw the line here. Just consider how unequally the remission would work. You are to remit the duty in the case of an officer who leaves £5,000. The amount of that duty would be £150, and you therefore make a present of £150 to his wife and family. But take the case of an officer who leaves nothing; you make no remission to him at all. Surely his wife and family would need assistance far more than the wife and family of a man who leaves £5,000. My hon. and gallant friend can scarcely have considered the effect of his proposal. He proposes that the £5,000 should be deducted in every case. Now in certain cases the deduction of £5,000 from the total amount left would be to limit the death duties to 3 per cent., and in other cases to 5 per cent. [Captain PRETYMAN dissented.] Well, I won't press that point; I only wanted to show that a remission of this nature must necessarily act in favour of the officer who leaves most. If an officer left £5,000, that money might go on his death perhaps to strangers, or to cousins, or to nephews. Well, these are not materially disadvantaged by his death; they in fact get an advantage: and yet, by this proposal

the death duty would be remitted in this case too. Take a son who has a young father, and who therefore does not expect to get his £5,000 soon. If his father was an officer and killed in the war, the consequence would be that he would really be advantaged. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] Certainly he would be materially advantaged. But take the case of a poor man, a man destitute of £5,000, who leaves a widow and children who had been entirely depending upon him. In consequence of the death of that officer it is quite possible the widow and children would have to go to the workhouse. It is manifest that the advantage goes all the wrong way. The plan would give nothing to him that hath nothing, and to him that hath something it would give something more. No; in my belief this is not the fund from which these allowances should be made. They should be made out of the funds provided for the Army and Navy, and then make them as large, as splendid, and as generous as you like. Do not deal with them out of the death duties, which should be levied on some consistent and consecutive principle, and not on the principle of dealing with hard cases as they arise. I do not think this is a right plan; but if my right hon. friend wants a right plan, I commend to him an Amendment which I have ventured to put down, which goes to this, that the widow, and everybody——

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot anticipate his Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: To tell the truth, I was anticipating it because I was afraid my Amendment would be ruled out of order. I will, however, follow your ruling, Sir; but I am informed that a suggestion has been made in an unauthorised quarter which would fully meet the case by making the same allowance all round. I believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer has practically adopted, in his reply, the suggestion which the unknown person to whom I have referred has put on the Paper, and I believe the right hon. Gentleman is right.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I should say that the hon. and gallant Gentleman in moving this Amendment did not take the right way to gain support for it when he made a quite uncalled for attack on the Front Opposition Bench. Then he made an attack on the hon. Member for East Mayo, because that hon. Gentleman had expressed an opinion against the dole to be given to officers. I consider it nothing short of a dole, and I am sure these men who are going to be killed in South Africa would be ashamed to ask the Treasury for a dole, either in an indirect or direct form. All these new clauses have been put down for the purpose of gaining a little cheap popularity in the country. There is nothing in the Press nowadays but jingoism from top to bottom. I am very pleased that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not going to accept the Amendment, although suggested from the other side of the House; but I may remind the Committee that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has treated the proposals made on the other side of the House very differently from those made on this side by the Members from Ireland. I oppose the clause because the relief given will fall on the taxpayers. The most comical thing about it is that an officer who has £5,000 would get relief to the extent of £150 to £200, but an unfortunate officer who has no money at all simply gets nothing. That is part of the system of helping the rich in every direction. I have heard great praises given for the self-sacrifice made by the gentlemen who are going to the front; but all these gentlemen, when they return, will be candidates for every situation open. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer should see his way to make some provision for the unfortunate soldiers from Ireland who come home without legs or arms, and are disabled for life.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is wandering from the clause under discussion.

MR. DALY: I admit that; but, at the same time, I was looking forward to the time when it is quite possible that some of these soldiers who come home to Ireland maimed for life will be a charge on the rates; and I think that if provision is made for the officers it should be made for the soldiers. I find there is £8,335——

*THE CHAIRMAN: That is really not germane to the subject; and I warn the hon. Member that he must not wander from the clause under discussion.

MR. DALY: I did not wander from the clause. I expect we shall go to a division on this clause, and not allow the hon. and gallant Gentleman to withdraw it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the Committee will not prolong the discussion. It will only delay the consideration of the remaining clauses of the Bill if a debate be continued which will lead to no practical result.

Question put and negatived.

Question proposed:—

New clause—

"Section 20 of The Customs Consolidation Act, 1876 (which has reference to the effect of changes of duty on existing contracts), shall apply to the imposition of new duties as well as to increases, decreases, or repeals, and as so amended shall apply to duties of excise as well as to duties of customs, with the substitution in the case of the excise duty on beer of the time of the charge of the duty for the time of the clearance and delivery from the warehouse."—(*Mr Lough.*)

Brought up and read the first and second times, and added.

New clause—

"A conveyance on sale made for any consideration in respect whereof it is chargeable with *ad valorem* duty, and in further consideration of a covenant by the purchaser to make, or of his having previously made, any substantial improvement of or addition to the property conveyed to him, or of any covenant relating to the subject matter of the conveyance, is not chargeable, and shall be deemed not to have been chargeable with any duty in respect of such further consideration."—(*Mr. Bond.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I should like to hear the views of the Right Hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this clause.

*MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) said the object of the clause was to remove an inconvenience which had been recognised by the Treasury. Doubts had arisen as to whether duty should be charged on covenants relating to improvements in addition to the *ad valorem* duty on conveyances. Although the practice of the Inland Revenue Department had been not to charge anything in respect of these covenants, last year an attempt was made, owing to some too minute scrutiny of the matter, to charge stamp duty upon the covenants as to improvements. The inconvenience was especially felt in the case of building estates, where a company or an individual divided a large property into small lots and disposed of them at from £5 to £50 a lot. The *ad valorem* duty on a £50 lot would be 5s., but if every covenant relating to the land, such as those regarding fences, gates, etc., were to be charged as well, it would be seen that the burden would be very excessive indeed. He believed that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer was prepared to accept the clause, and he trusted that the Committee would recognise the justice of it.

MR. HALDANE believed there was a good deal in what the hon. Member had said. He thought, however, that the words of the clause were wide, and deserved consideration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was very careful about these matters, and he should like an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that in accepting them he was not parting with any portion of the public revenue.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I have looked into the matter myself, and I am quite satisfied that the provisions of the law as they now stand are unfair and unreasonable; and that the duty is one that should not be charged in these cases.

Question put.

The Committee proceeded to a Division; but the doors of the No Lobby having been opened before the Tellers in the No Lobby were present, the Chairman directed the Committee to proceed again to a Division:—Ayes, 218; Noes, 37. (Division List No. 91.)

AYES.

Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling

Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
Colville, John
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Cross, Alex. (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dorkin, Richard Sim
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duckworth, James
Emmott, Alfred
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir Walter, (Derby Co.)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greville, Hon Ronald
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (Carnarvon)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Langley, Batty
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverp'l)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.
M'Killop, James
Maddison, Fred.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morton, Ed. J. C. (Devonport)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt Hn Horace Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Rt. Hn Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, J. Parker (Lanarks.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomlinson, W. E. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, Eugene
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunt'n
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'sf'd
Woods, Samuel
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Billson, Alfred
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John

Doogan, P. C.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kilbride, Denis
Lloyd-George, David
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Samuel, J. Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Daly and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Clause added.

The following Amendments stood next on the Paper—

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork)—

To move the following Clause:—

"Where, before the sixth day of March nineteen hundred, any person shall have contracted for the sale of tea without reference to the duties of customs thereon granted by this Act, it shall be lawful for that person, and he is hereby authorised to receive from the purchaser, and sue for and recover the equivalent in money of the excess of those duties over the duties which would have been payable if this Act had not been passed."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES—

To move the following Clause:—

"The Commissioners of Inland Revenue shall pay, out of the proceeds of the estate duty, to the representatives of any person subject to military or naval law, who has died while on active service since the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.

"(1) If such person leaves any dependants wholly dependent on him at the time of his death, the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds;

"(2) If such person does not leave any such dependants, but leaves any dependants in part dependent upon him at the time of his death, such sum not exceeding one hundred and fifty pounds as may be determined by the Treasury to be reasonable and proportionate to the injury to the said dependants."

*THE CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment on the Paper is covered by a clause inserted in place of Clause 8 struck out of the Bill. The last Amendment, which is in the name of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, is outside the scope of the Bill, and therefore out of order.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I submit to you, Sir, most respectfully that my Amendment, which among other things proposes to amend the law, comes within the terms of the resolution to that effect in the Committee upon which this Bill was founded. It has been an unbroken rule on the Finance Bill to allow general Amendments to be moved to the law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue. If we refer to the ruling of Mr. Speaker on the 23rd of May, 1895*, we find that he used these words—

"It was true that the land tax and the estate duty were not taxes which were levied by virtue of the Finance Bill, but there was a long series of precedents which showed that in Customs and Inland Revenue Bills reductions of taxes which were not levied actually by virtue of the Bill might be opposed in Committee on the Bill. The Bill, it was to be observed, was founded on Resolutions in Committee of Ways and Means, one of which contained the words 'it is expedient to amend the law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue.' The presence of those words had been held to cover general Amendments to the Finance Bill."

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I am perfectly familiar with that ruling; but the hon. Gentleman has not convinced me that the proposed Amendment is in order.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is no general Amendment admissible in the Bill?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

Schedules 1 and 2 agreed to.

Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill, as amended, to the House."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 229; Noes, 28. (Division List No. 92.)

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxxiv., page 127.

Allison, Robert Andrew
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Asher, Alexander
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness
Bainbridge, Emerson
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts.

Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Billson, Alfred
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Brassey, Albert
Broadhurst, Henry
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colville, John
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis Fiennes Stanley W
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dilke, Right Hon. Sir Charles
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William T.
Duckworth, James
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Emmott, Alfred
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hn A G H (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wednesbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampstd
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Langley, Batty
Lawrence, Sir E Durning- (Corn
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leng, Sir John
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan.)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Francis William
Lowles, John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W)
M'Killop, James
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
More, Robert Jasper (Shrops.
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Newdigate, Francis Alex.
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Oldroyd, Mark
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northamb.)
Perks, Robert William
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plunkett, Rt. Hon. H. Curzon
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Rickitt, Harold James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James P. (Lanarks)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Steadman, William Charles
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Wason, Eugene
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Ta'nt'n
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph P.- (Birm.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norf'k
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf.
Woods, Samuel
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES:—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bowles, T Gibson (King's Lynn
Burns, John
Cawley, Frederick
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Hayden, John Patrick
Hogan, James Francis
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kilbride, Denis
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McDermott, Patrick
M'Ghee, Richard
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Redmond, William (Clare)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Bill reported, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 159.]

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Select Committee of five members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction; that a message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath appointed a Committee of five members to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction; and to request that their Lordships will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of this House."—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I am rather surprised that an important Committee of this kind should be moved without an explanation as to what its object is and at whose instance it was suggested. I am not aware that any of the municipal bodies of the country have petitioned in favour of this Committee, and I am not aware of any other public representative institution that has asked for its appointment. It certainly would have been more respectful to the House had some statement been made by some Member of the Government as to why it is to be appointed and by whom it was suggested. It appears to me that there may be at the bottom of this people, whoever they may be, who instigated the Government into this action, and who are opposed to the works carried on by the various municipal authorities of the country. If the syndicated interests of the country, the promoters of private companies, who have so much interest in the Government, are the people at the bottom of it, we ought to know. When a mysterious motion affecting an important subject of this kind is moved we should get some information, but in this instance one of the whips, making a profound bow to the Speaker, tries to set in motion a piece of machinery which undoubtedly may be fraught with the greatest interest to the country. I am not in a position to say that the municipal authorities object to it. My opinion is that the municipal authorities have very little to fear at the hands of this or any other Committee. I have no authority to speak for the corporations, but I am able to state with respect to the great industrial concerns which are carried on by the corporation of the town for which I sit in this House, that they are the source of enormous profit to the ratepayers, and that the profits go to the relief of rates instead of in dividends to persons who do nothing to earn them. If it is to strike a blow at that class of trading by municipal corporations I think the Government have been ill-advised indeed, and will get themselves into considerable trouble and discredit by having anything to do with the stirring up of a matter of this sort. This proposed inquiry has been promoted by those who are jealous of the trading capacity of our municipal authorities. On these grounds I protest against the appointment of the Committee. I cannot imagine why it is suggested. We are asked to appoint a Committee of five to meet a similar number of Members of the Upper House. Who invited the Members of the other House to join in the inquiry into corporation work? The Members of that House know nothing whatever of municipal life. There are very few of them who know anything of the local

[illegible]

... to produce and to offer evidence. It is time the corporations should be told what it is about, that they may be in a position to prepare themselves with their defence, if they are to be called up on their defence. I believe all prisoners are supplied with some statement of the nature of the charge brought against them. I have not heard a word of what the charge is against the corporations. Before we proceed further I hope we will be favoured with a statement by some member of the Government. Much will depend on that statement whether a division will be taken against the appointment of a Committee. If the Government are determined to have a Committee, let us have a little more time for the consideration of it, and let notice be sent round to the local authorities so that they may not be taken by surprise, and, as it were, attacked from behind by some influence which we cannot trace and of which we know nothing.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): The corporations look upon themselves as persons accused, and they do not think it would be right to adopt the position of seeking in any way to burke full investigation. They accept with reluctance the Committee the right hon. Gentleman is going to appoint, though they think it unnecessary. They say, "We are arraigned before this Committee, and ... [illegible]

[illegible]

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I apprehend that the object of this is to secure, through this Committee, the framing of a series of common clauses which should be inserted in Bills brought before the House. I see no objection to that. I should like to ask the Government if they will kindly say what they propose to do as to the calling of evidence before this Committee.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The hon. Member for Dundee has accurately described the position taken up by the Government, and so has the hon. Member for South-west Manchester. It is quite a mistake to suppose that this motion has been put down with the smallest intention of making any attack whatever on corporations. Nothing was further from the thoughts of the Government. It is extremely desirable that inquiry should be made with the view of seeing whether some conclusions cannot be arrived at as to the general lines which should be followed not only with regard to Bills of this kind before the House, but also with regard to Provisional Orders. I may say that we at the Board of Trade require to have some kind of direction, such as that suggested, in order to enable us to deal properly with the constant applications that are being made to us by corporations. The hon. Gentleman opposite has asked why we have asked a Committee of the other House to join. Whether the powers asked by corporations are asked for by Bill or by Provisional Order, they have to pass through both Houses of Parliament and [illegible] matters

where both Houses have to take action it has always been the custom that the two bodies should sit together and arrive at a common conclusion. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Dundee, I have to say that it is very desirable and necessary that this Committee, when formed, should have the power of calling witnesses. When the Joint Committee is nominated I understand a motion of that kind will be made. With regard to this matter, the Committee should be empowered to get such evidence as will enable them to come to a proper conclusion in the matter.

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): The right hon. Gentleman has forgotten in making his appeal to the House for the appointment of this Committee that this proposal does not emanate from a Government Department like the Board of Trade, neither did it spring from the Local Government Board, which is the proper Department to have municipal enterprise within its purview. The suggestion for this Committee sprang from a private Member last year. It was down for three months, and I, with a number of other Members, had the pleasure of sitting up until twelve o'clock, and we were successful in preventing the motion coming on. What we ought to know is why it is that the Government have suddenly undertaken the responsibility of backing a Committee which last year they would have nothing at all to do with, and which they left to the irresponsible care of a private Member who had very little support even on his own side. Why was it put down last year? I think I can throw a little light upon that point. The Government brought in a Bill, and a very good Bill, for nationalising the telephones in a large direction. The hon. Member who put the motion down put it down with a view to hanging up the Government Bill. It was supposed to have served its purpose for that session. But it did not succeed, and all at once we found it removed from the Paper. But this year this skeleton Committee is introduced in order to be used against corporation Bills and municipal enterprise with precisely the same object as it was intended to have with regard to the Government Bill for dealing with the telephone service. We have heard not a single word in explanation of why the Government have accepted the parentage of this bastard Committee. The President of the Board of Trade says the Board of Trade want guidance. If that is so let the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board and the Selection Committee, with representatives of the House of Lords, meet together and give us some responsible reasons for the appointment of a Joint Committee. If it is for uniform treatment of similar Bills on similar subjects in different Houses in order to secure consistency in regard to municipal enterprise, that is a reason one can respect, and such a reason may contain arguments that we can understand. But when we find that a Committee which was put down last year to block a Government Bill, and which was ineffectual for its purpose, is now turned on to the general field of municipal enterprise, I am indeed surprised that the Government should have shown such poverty of reasons and such paucity of argument in favour of the appointment of a Committee which the state of municipal enterprise does not at this moment warrant. What is the reason for this Committee? Not a word has been given to tell us. What is the argument in favour of it? We have heard of none. What is the necessity for it from the point of view of municipal enterprise? Is municipal enterprise in this country incompatible with the ratepayers' interests or with public policy? We have had neither speech nor argument to contend that it is. Where is the evidence that municipal bodies ought to be put upon their trial? In the absence of evidence is there to be a rambling inquiry, a fishing expedition, to last four or five years, as did the Labour Commission, so that in the meantime municipalities like Leicester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Dublin, and other places should be prevented from promoting Bills which have for their object the benefit of the ratepayers, and the promotion of which has the full approval of the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants?—because the House must remember that no Bill can be introduced under the Borough Funds Act unless it has three-fourths of the ratepayers in favour of it. The delay caused by this Committee will impose upon the public great inconvenience. The gentlemen who met at the Society of Arts will then be able to say, "Oh, the municipalities are doing nothing for electric traction;

they are doing nothing to link up the urban districts with the outside local areas: they are supine and indifferent. Let private enterprise come in." Through this Committee sitting for three or four years private enterprise will get an unfair advantage over municipal enterprise. In a word, this Committee is to be a hanging Committee—the kind of Committee the Royal Academy appoint a week before the Academy opens. This Committee is to be for hanging up the projects of municipal enterprise with their faces to the wall, so that the company promoter and a number of gentlemen of Oriental mind and Eastern expression and Babylonish tastes can do with electric lighting as they have been doing with certain portions of the English Constitution and the British Empire, converting legislative spheres of influence into spheres of private interest. When I heard this Committee first spoken about I thought we were going to have an indictment of the big corporations. Are our municipal corporations corrupt? No. Then why an inquiry? Are they inefficient? The test of efficiency is the profit that municipal enterprise makes for the reduction of the general rates. It is because they are efficient, and conduct their concerns with economy and large profit, they are to be assailed. Is the inquiry necessary? Absolutely no. Why do I say that? Because every municipal enterprise undertaken by a local authority is subject to the best of all inquiries—the criticism of the ratepayers who pay the rates. Then there is the Provisional Order, which has to run the gauntlet of both Houses, at First, Second, and Third Reading, and also go through the ordeal of the Committee upstairs. Then there is the audit of the Local Government Board—not a single shilling can be spent on electric lighting, water, tramways, or markets unless it is passed by the auditor appointed by either the Local Government Board or the municipality; whilst, finally, the test of election every year is the best safeguard. In the absence of inefficiency, extravagance, and corruption in our municipal life, I strongly protest against the appointment of this Committee as a slur upon our municipal life—a municipal life which deservedly occupies the highest position of any municipal life in the whole civilised world. Now I come to the Committee itself. This Committee ought to be appointed not by the Selection Committee, but by this House itself. I have a great respect for the House of Lords when it confines itself to its proper work. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes, I have: I believe that if private enterprise tries to bull-dose and chloroform the House of Commons, of which this motion is an evidence, we may have to look for the purity of our public life and the preservation of our municipal rights to the House of Lords as a second line of defence against monopoly that abuses its power and subordinates Governments to its ends. But I am quite prepared to wait until the necessity for that condition of things arises. In the meantime, the House of Lords is not the body which knows most about municipal government and municipal enterprise. I venture to say that this is a revolution in private Bill procedure which ought to be demanded from the House only by strong facts and irresistible argument. I could quite understand the appointment of this Committee if Glasgow were riddled with corruption as Tammany Hall is in New York. ["Oh, oh!"] That is my view, and I express that view having examined that institution at close quarters, and so far as I am concerned, speaking generally of municipal life, I know nothing outside this country to equal the municipal life of Great Britain and Ireland. I am surprised that the First Lord of the Treasury, whose knowledge of nearly every phase of national life does him credit, and has, perhaps, placed him where he is, should lend himself to a suggestion of this kind. His own city of Manchester is opposed to this Committee, and many of the Manchester councillors regard it as a slight upon the local life of their district. Many of the municipalities, the bulk of the members from which support the right hon. Gentleman, say that this is a superfluous inquiry and that it can reveal nothing which the Government cannot know more clearly without its aid. Except for deferring to that body of company promoters *in excelsis*, the Liberty and Property Defence League, and except for pandering to the ignorant prejudices of the Lord Wemysses and the gang of company promoters who met at the Society of Arts three months ago, I can see no reason for this Committee. I do appeal to the First Lord to recognise that if this Committee is appointed and sits for a long time great

harm will be done to the ratepayers' interests of this country. The municipalities of the country object to this Committee, not because they are afraid of inquiry, but because they object to having their town clerks and mayors and committees being summoned to the House of Commons or the House of Lords to be interrogated unnecessarily by a Committee that cannot know as much about the matter as the auditor of the Local Government Board. It is because the appointment of this Committee is dangerous, unnecessary, and is merely demanded by a small clique who have made too much fuss in the country about municipal enterprise, that I appeal to the House of Commons not to support the creation of this Committee.

*MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): I cannot see that the Committee proposed by this motion is in the slightest degree hostile to the interests of the municipalities; in my opinion it is very greatly in their favour, and I am sure the decision of the Committee will be for the guidance of the Committees upstairs. I have been Chairman of one of those Committees, and have had the greatest trouble in discriminating where municipal trading should cease. In former days, municipalities no doubt undertook great enterprises which were very useful for their ratepayers, but those undertakings were always confined within the boundaries of the corporation. Now schemes have been started for constructing electric tramways outside the borough boundaries altogether, and how can a Committee upstairs tell where this should end? We want the guidance of the House upon this subject, and if the House is pleased to appoint this Committee, I think some conclusion will be come to in the matter which will be in the interests of the corporations themselves, because they will be saved a great deal of money in promoting schemes which they will know, from the decision of this Committee, could not get through the House. In reply to one remark of the hon. Member opposite, let me instance the case of a corporation which brought forward a scheme for a large system of electric tramways within a six mile radius of the corporation. The scheme may be good, or it may be bad, but why should it stop at the six mile radius? Why not have a twelve mile radius? Why not work a system of electric tramways or a railway to connect the corporation with some other town? On all these matters Committees upstairs require direction. They cannot get that direction from the Orders of the House. It is most important in defence of the ratepayers that the House should lay down definite rules as to whether the corporations are to bring forward these schemes, and therefore I hope the House will pass this motion.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I must congratulate the hon. Member for North Hampshire on having given the first approach to an intelligent reason for the appointment of this Committee. I quite admit that in the specific case which he has given it is quite proper that there should be certain well-defined considerations which should be taken into account by each Committee, and that the practice upon that point should be uniform. But the motion before the House goes miles beyond anything of that kind. We are asked to appoint a Select Committee "to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction." I agree with my hon. friend the Member for Battersea in the suggestion he has made as to the origin and genesis of this motion. I cannot bring myself to believe that it is the spontaneous idea of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Like the hon. Member for Battersea, I have lively recollections of the origin of this motion. The right hon. Gentleman, as he was then, but who is now a distinguished ornament in another place, and takes a strong interest in this question, because he holds very strong views on the subject of municipal trading, was the real author of this motion. He had a very definite idea in his mind; he knew what he meant by asking for a Committee to inquire into the principles which should regulate embarking on industrial enterprise by corporations. He held that all embarking on industrial enterprise should be discouraged and prohibited by the legislature and that it should be confined within the very narrowest possible limits. That is an intelligent position. But that is not a question for any Committee, still less a Joint Committee of the two Houses, to inquire into. That is a question for

this House to determine after debate, and it may turn out to be a very large question, in regard to which the House will not come to its full conclusion at once. For my part, I object very much, on a subject in regard to which there may be the greatest conflict of policy between this House and the other, to our finding ourselves hereafter, whenever a question arises on a Private Bill as to the course to be taken, bound by a decision of a Joint Committee over which we have no control—a decision which would be thrown in our teeth upon all such occasions. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Board of Trade thought guidance was wanted, not only for Select Committees but also for the Board itself. What guidance are they likely to get? This Committee will sit and take evidence, and hear objections by counsel if necessary. I quite see that it might get a large amount of useful information. But what is the sort of question we have to consider? This is not a Committee whose function it will be to frame clauses or to draw up some code of restrictions on legislation such as those embodied in the model clauses dealing with Provisional Orders, etc. The province of this Committee is something very much wider; it is to consider general principles—general principles which will apply to the very class of Bills out of which these general clauses and sections have arisen. Take a single illustration which is in the minds of hon. Members who have been present through this sitting. We have had a debate upon the question of whether the London County Council should have the control of its water supply. That debate would have assumed an entirely different form had we been discussing the question of whether Glasgow should have the control of its water supply. In the case of Glasgow, just as in the case of Birmingham and many other places, the question of the control of matters, which is refused for special reasons to the London County Council, assumes an entirely different form. It is not a question which can be settled by any decision of a Committee—whether these corporations should be allowed to indulge in industrial enterprises, such as that of running tramways. It is a question to be decided with reference to the circumstances of each municipality, and that can only be determined by the House after debate on the Second Reading of the Bills, with such assistance as may be obtained from a Select Committee. Take another illustration. We have had a great deal of difficulty in settling the question of whether the power of supplying electricity in bulk should be given to private companies or reserved for municipal corporations. Why was that? Because it was considered by the House of Commons that supplying electrical power in bulk was a very different thing from supplying electric light. One was something in the interests of the public generally, while the other would be supplied to a comparatively few firms, and, therefore, in the view of many members, a proper thing for private persons to undertake rather than a municipality. That, again, is not a question of principle which can be settled by a Committee. You have to consider the enterprise, the state of development in which the enterprise is—matters which may be entirely different in five years time—and it is impossible for us to bind ourselves by any hard-and-fast rules, whether they are laid down by ourselves or by a Committee, no matter how eminent, sitting upstairs. The whole history of the practice of this House with regard to these matters seem to show that this is a matter which cannot be considered as one of abstract principle, but which must be considered upon its merits. I have heard nothing intelligible from the right hon. Gentleman as a justification of the appointment of this Committee. There have been two intelligible reasons put forward in the debate. One is the question of whether there should be an extension of tramways beyond the municipal limits. That is a very narrow point, and much too small to justify this motion. The other is the question of referring the whole subject of municipal trading to this Committee. Against that suggestion I certainly protest on behalf of the proper functions of this House. I cannot help thinking that this motion is one which, if carried into effect, will lead to the sort of thing with which we have become far too familiar within the last five years—namely, the practice of the Government saying "There is the Report of a Royal Commission, or of a Select Committee, or of a Joint Committee which lays down the principles on which this case must be decided"—by which means we are prevented from giving full consideration to the principle of Bills which come

before us. I dislike this practice which is growing up of the Government sheltering itself behind Reports of Commissions and Committees. That practice has been carried too far, and this is an instance in which the House should say that the matter proposed to be referred to this Committee is a matter which it is for the House itself to determine, and with the jurisdiction over which the House will not part.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I venture to hope that this discussion, which has been a very instructive one, will not be unduly prolonged. ["Oh, oh!"] I may express a pious hope, at all events, that it will not be unduly prolonged; because, after all, we are only asking for an investigation by a competent tribunal into a problem the importance of which is denied by nobody. The hon. Member for Battersea stated that the Government had taken up a Committee originally moved for in this House by a private Member. My memory for details is not very good, but I believe in that statement the hon. Gentleman is inaccurate. I have been given a reference in *Hansard* which shows that on March 2nd last year I was asked by my hon. friend the Member for North Islington whether a Committee could not be appointed to inquire into this question, and my reply was*—

"In answer to the hon. Member I have to say that the important question to which he refers is one which deserves early investigation, and we, the Government, think the proper method of that investigation would be by a Joint Committee of the two Houses."

That is the policy which I stated on behalf of my colleagues on the 2nd March last year, and it has been the policy to which we have ever since steadily adhered. The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down objects to this policy, as I think other Members also have objected to it, on the ground that a Committee of this sort appears to mean the passing of a *prima facie* condemnation upon municipal trading, and that it appears to prejudge the question of whether municipalities are to be allowed to go beyond the bare necessities of life, as it were, which they have to provide for their inhabitants, and to launch out into the illimitable field of commercial enterprise. The Government do not desire to prejudge that question. We do not desire to lay down any principles for the guidance of the Committee. We do not say whether it is right or whether it is wrong, that, in addition to supplying proper highways, proper police protection, gas, water, and so forth, municipalities should go further, and, either within their own area, or still more, without their own area, deal with these larger commercial concerns. I believe myself that in many cases these commercial undertakings may very properly be entered into by municipalities. That is my own personal opinion. But what we ask for is not a judgment upon that abstract, or more or less abstract, question; it is for some general guidance for this and the other House as to the method by which we are to deal from time to time with the innumerable practical problems which come before us in connection with private Bill legislation, and also in connection with matters for which the Government are responsible. As has been pointed out by one of the Chairmen of these Committees, the Committees of this House have no guidance upon the general principles which should regulate their action. Is that a fair position into which to put four gentlemen chosen from among Members of the House by the Committee of Selection, and ask them thus to deal with great complicated questions? They are competent to deal professionally with evidence placed before them, but it is too much to ask them, without any mandate from this House, and without any general principles laid down for them by this House, to deal with what are after all great questions of policy. The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down appears to think that a Joint Committee of the two Houses would have some coercive action in the policy which this House or the other House should pursue. That is really not the case. This House would have before it the Report of that Committee, and the evidence upon which that Report was founded. It would neither be obliged to accept the Report in general nor in a particular instance give application to it. The House might even reverse it. Our freedom of action will be wholly unimpaired, but some machinery will be provided by which the arguments and the evidence on either side will be put before us in some intelligible and assimilable form. The hon. and learned Member says this is a question

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxvii., page 1053.

upon which the House itself should decide. How is the House to decide and by what machinery can the House decide particular issues now? A particular case comes before us. On that particular case no doubt we can decide now, and on that particular case we should still be able to decide after the Joint Committee has reported. But how can we come to any decision upon the broad question of policy to which the hon. and learned Member has referred? It is something to produce an abstract resolution on a Tuesday afternoon, but is the Government to come forward and lay before the House an abstract resolution in regard to municipal trading? Is that to be debated all night, and finally to be voted upon, and is such a debate and division to be any guidance as to policy? Such a debate and division would not be of any value unless we came to it armed with all the assistance which the Report of a Joint Committee is so well qualified to give. I confess it seems to me that those who wish to refuse this Committee, to closure this investigation, are deliberately giving their verdict for chaos rather than for order. They are asking the House to proceed to deal with enormous questions affecting the corporate rights and interests of immense bodies of ratepayers in a piecemeal fashion and at haphazard. That is not a course which the Government can recommend, and I earnestly ask the House—not to bind themselves to follow the Report which a Joint Committee of both Houses may come to, not to bind themselves blindly to acquiesce in a decision which five representatives of this House and five representatives of the other House may come to, but to give themselves the chance of having the evidence collected and decided upon by a competent tribunal. If after that investigation the House should differ from the Report of the Joint Committee (and the House of Commons very often does differ from its Committees), at all events we shall do it with knowledge and not in ignorance, knowing what is alleged on either side. If we differ, even in that case our action will be incomparably more profitable to the community at large, to the great corporations of this country, and to the work of private enterprise, than the haphazard and random dealing with great interests with which we have got familiar in recent years, and with which, unless this Committee is appointed, we are likely to become more and more familiar as time goes on.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): In supporting this proposal the right hon. Gentleman described it as having for its chief object the protection of the ratepayers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said that.

MR. DILLON: I want to ask any hon. Member who supports this, what evidence he can lay before this House that the ratepayers have asked for this protection. Before we are asked to consent to this measure, which has been described by an hon. Member opposite as a measure for the protection of the ratepayers, ought we not to have from its supporters some statement that a considerable minority of the ratepayers are anxious for this protection? The very reverse is the fact. It is not a proposal which has emanated from any body of ratepayers outside this House. It had its origin in a band of Gentlemen in this House who are interested in the promotion of great schemes of private enterprise. What are the facts which are known to the citizens of municipalities in great Britain and Ireland. Every year they are beleaguered and beset by syndicates and private companies who are endeavouring to grasp those enterprises which ought to be a legitimate field for municipal trading, such as electric lighting and tramways. I live in a city where the tramways have passed into the hands of a company which is now making excellent profits. I should have preferred to see those profits going to the relief of the rates in the city. Every municipality in the country is besieged by these syndicates and companies who are endeavouring to get hold of the valuable monopolies. What do we hear from the President of the Board of Trade? He declared, in a very extraordinary speech, that the Local Government Board wanted guidance. But this question only turned up last year, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University and the Member for North Islington made a proposal in regard to the telephone monopoly. The proposal before the House is manifestly one made in the interests of syndicates, companies, and private enterprise as against municipal enterprise. No attempt has been made to show that the ratepayers

of the country are interested in this proposal. Has any attempt been made to show that the ratepayers of the great municipalities of this country have suffered by the municipalities getting hold of and extending their grip over industrial enterprises? It is quite the contrary, and, so far as I am aware, in every instance in which a great municipality has got hold of some great industrial undertaking, the result has been beyond all question a great saving to the ratepayers. There is not a single shred of foundation for this extraordinary new departure in favour of private enterprise. In Dublin we provided ourselves twenty years ago with one of the best water supplies in the country, and there is no doubt that we have saved our ratepayers enormous sums of money by having got this great industrial enterprise in our hands at the very beginning. Our experience goes to show that the growth of these municipal enterprises, and the gradual extinction of monopolies in gas, water, electric lighting, and tramway companies has been a growth of progress marked by immense saving to the ratepayers of the country. And what do the Government say? I never heard a more lame defence. All they say is that we had chaos, and now we want order and guidance. If you had had order and guidance in this matter twenty years ago we should have made no progress at all. Why have these great principles gradually been established? They can only be established piecemeal by applying yourself to the particular circumstances of the case. I say it is because you had chaos that you succeeded, and because you were not bound by the rules of a Committee of the House of Lords. After half a century of free action in dealing with this municipal question, suddenly the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board awake to the fact that we are in the midst of chaos, and that we cannot proceed any further without guidance. And remember, the guidance sought is not to come from a Committee of this House, but the House of Lords is to be asked to teach us how to deal with municipal affairs. I do not think that the record of the House of Lords in connection with municipal development is so brilliant that we ought to seek its assistance. The House of Lords is permeated with company directors and company promoters, and there is no hope in that direction. We are told that we want guidance and enlightenment from a Committee that is to investigate this matter in an abstract sense. In my opinion the proper guidance on municipal development should be sought from the experience of the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board. Even if such a proposal is necessary, I do press upon the Government and the House that the proper way to lay a foundation for such a measure would be to appoint a Committee of this House and not a Joint Committee. Why did hon. Members opposite during the telephone struggle suggest a Joint Committee of the two Houses? They suggested that because they knew that the friends of private enterprise would be found on that Committee in a sweeping majority. Whatever chance there might be for private enterprise in a Committee of this House, a joint Committee would be bound to give the syndicates and the company promoters a majority. It is ridiculous for the Government to tell us that no harm can be done by this innocent investigation, and that we shall be just as free afterwards to reject its decisions if we choose. That statement might do very well for an hon. Member elected yesterday, without experience in this House, but for those who have been here fifteen years it is rather absurd to try and throw dust in our eyes in that fashion. Every hon. Member who knows the practice and customs of this House knows very well that the Report of such a Committee would be thrown in our teeth in every debate upon this subject. Such a Report would inevitably have great weight, and would affect the votes of many hon. Members of this House. Undoubtedly the Committees upstairs would accept the decisions of the Joint Committee as their guiding principles, and it could have no other possible effect than to limit the freedom of the Committees of this House. It is because I believe that such a limiting of the Committees of this House would be a distinct evil and a retrograde step that I am opposed to the appointment of this Joint Committee altogether. I believe that the true principle to adopt in approaching the consideration of this question of municipal enterprise is to allow the present machinery, which has worked admirably, to work still, and to allow the Committees of this House to apply their intelligence, free of any more fetters than those which already

exist in the Standing Orders of the House, to the consideration of the circumstances of each individual case; to allow their decisions to be freely reviewed by Members of this House; and to proceed unchecked and unfettered until the time arrives when it may be desirable to introduce some general measure which ought to orginate in this House and over which this House ought to have full control. I object to this proposal because I think the time has not come by many years for any investigation of the kind. There is no call for this proposal outside this House, and there is not a shred of evidence to show that it is demanded by the public outside this House. But even if it were proved and admitted that such an investigation is required, such investigation ought to be carried out, in the first instance, by a Committee appointed by this House, and it should not be a Joint Committee appointed at the request of Gentlemen who have made no secret of their desire to promote and increase the sphere and the development of companies and syndicates as compared with municipal effort. Hon. Members opposite have made no secret of their hostility to municipal effort, and they desire to refer it to a Joint Committee, because they believe that by so doing they will secure a majority in favour of private enterprise.

MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL (Stockton): After listening to the speech of the hon. Member for North Hampshire, I have my doubts as to the wisdom of this House passing this motion to-night without further discussion. I am certainly alarmed at the prospect, because I know some corporations that have purchased their gas works under Bills as far back as 1858. The hon. Member for North Hampshire pressed for a Committee last week which rejected a Bill because it extended the tramways beyond the borough, although that has been the universal practice. There is hardly a corporation in this country which has been granted private Bills for the supply of water or gas which has not the power to go beyond the borough boundary. What would be the position of many of our rural districts near our large towns if corporations were prevented from supplying them with pure water and with gas? I believe that in every case where the House of Commons has given the power to a corporation to purchase the gas or water supplies, such supplies go beyond the borough boundary. There are many private companies which have tramways in our large towns. These private companies have the right to run through the borough, and are connected with the suburbs of the town. If this Joint Committee were to report to the House that in no Bill in future should a corporation be allowed to go beyond the borough boundary, then the very power which has been given to many corporations to purchase the tramways will be nullified. As the hon. Member for East Mayo has pointed out, you cannot draw a hard-and-fast rule, and you must treat every Bill upon its merits. You must judge every private Bill, whether for the supply of water, gas, electricity, or tramways, upon its merits, because hard-and-fast rules will not apply to different private Bills. I know that there is a feeling on the other side of the House against municipalities, and particularly the London County Council, having the right which has been conferred upon almost every municipality in the country of supplying water to the people within the London area. I do appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury to at least adjourn this debate to-night before coming to any decision, because the Association of Municipal Corporations are holding a meeting on Saturday, and they are very much opposed to this resolution. If they learn on Saturday that it is the intention of the Government to appoint this Committee with a view of restricting——

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said he wished to point out that in the Act of

last year the forces mentioned were 184,853, whereas in this Bill the number was put at 430,000. He merely desired to call attention to the enormous increase.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

But it appearing to the Chairman that the motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, he declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

MR. CALDWELL asked the Under Secretary for War to give him an explanation of the words "from time to time." The clause provided that the Secretary of State might from time to time vary the condition of service and extend the term of the original enlistment up to twelve years.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have already announced to the House in respect to artillery that we propose to take enlistments for one year. As the law stood before, if an artilleryman wanted to re-engage after one year's service he could only re-engage for another eleven years. That is the interpretation placed upon those words by lawyers. I think the hon. Member is confusing service with the colours with the service of the Reservists. All we are asking for now is more elbow-room in dealing with a new problem.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5 :—

MR. CALDWELL said he desired to know from the Under Secretary what was meant by this clause.

MR. WYNDHAM: Our object is to make Sub-section 161 consistent with Sub-section 79. Sub-section 79 lays down that if a man is convicted of desertion or fraudulent enlistment he shall forfeit his previous service, but the Secretary of State may give it him back again. At the present time the Secretary of State has not the power to give him back that service. Sub-section 161 deals with cases of crime discovered after three years service. If a soldier behaves in an exemplary manner for three years he can have extended to him the benefit of Sub-section 79, and he can have also that service which he had previously forfeited.

MR. CALDWELL contended that the forfeiture was only in regard to fraudulent enlistment, and desertion did not come into the section. He had studied the enormous number of alterations and amendments to this Act, and he would defy anybody but an expert to make either head or tail of the Army Act. He had asked before that the Act should be consolidated and put into a convenient form.

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not profess to be an expert upon the interpretation of legal documents, and I leave that to the hon. Member opposite. Upon the question of proper legal phraseology we are bound to be guided by our legal counsel. This Amendment has been very carefully devised to effect an object to which every single person in this House agrees, and I cannot accept the interpretation which the hon. Gentleman puts upon this section. I think I may take it that every hon. Member of this House would wish the Secretary of State to have power to forgive this forfeiture of service.

MR. CALDWELL contended that it was no answer to say that the section had been carefully prepared. It did not need experts to interpret language of that kind, and if the Government intended to give the Secretary of State the power he asked for, a reference was required as to where the forfeiture came in under the Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have not had my attention drawn to that point, but I will undertake to look it up before the Report stage is reached.

MR. CALDWELL said it was no use trying to put him off in that way, and he begged leave to move to report progress.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk), in the Chair.]

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): What provision is made in the Act as to the form the census is to take?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The hon. Member will see that it is the same form as used hitherto.

MR. FLYNN: I know that provision is made, but my point is whether the number will be ascertained in each barony, or what area will be enumerated.

MR. ATKINSON: The number will be ascertained in each area of local administration.

MR. FLYNN: That means district councils districts.

MR. ATKINSON: Yes, that is so.

Bill reported without amendment; read the third time, and passed.

CHARITABLE LOANS (IRELAND) BILL.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve into Committee on the Bill."

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): We have been waiting here night after night watching this Bill, and many hon. Members interested in it are leaving for Ireland. I do wish the Attorney General for Ireland would put it down for some day after Easter, to enable those who lost their chance of speaking on the second reading to have a reasonable debate upon it. I put it to the Attorney General that it is very unfair to bring it on in this way.

MR. ATKINSON: I propose putting it down for Monday. I should be very reluctant to put it off until after Easter. I hope the hon. Member will consent to that course.

MR. DILLON: Our experience goes to show that there is very little chance of reaching it on Monday, and the Attorney General gives us no pledge that it will be taken upon that day.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): The chances are that the Bill will not come on for discussion on Monday. We do not want to block the Bill, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will give us the assurance that he will put this Bill off until after Easter.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): The Second Reading of this Bill came on last Thursday night, and we had not a fair opportunity of considering it. As the right hon. Gentleman got the Second Reading through without opposition, I hope he will agree to what we ask him to do.

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member object to Monday?

MR. DALY: I do object.

Mr. SPEAKER having ascertained by the preponderance of voices that the majority of the House desired that the Committee should be deferred till Monday next, Committee deferred accordingly till Monday next.

COAL MINES (PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR UNDERGROUND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 30th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

HAMMOND (G. H.) COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

SCOTTISH AMERICAN INVESTMENT COMPANY, LIMITED, BILL [H.L.].

A petition of Messrs. Faithfull and Owen, of Dacre House, Victoria Street, Westminster, solicitors, praying that Standing Order No. 91 may be dispensed with, and that the Bill may be read a second time; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 91 to be considered on Monday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said Bill.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

The consent of the Prince of Wales in right of his Duchy of Cornwall, signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

NEWTON AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [H.L.].

CORK, BANDON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

GUN BARREL PROOF ACT, 1868, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

IMSCHENETZKY'S URALITE PATENT BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

LONDON SEA WATER SUPPLY BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 27th of February last and 8th instant discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

SUNDERLAND CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Harewood be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Blythswood; read, and agreed to.

MOTHERWELL WATER BILL [H.L.].

CHURCH'S PATENT BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

AIRDRIE, COATBRIDGE, AND DISTRICT WATER TRUST BILL.

HARTLEPOOL GAS AND WATER BILL.

MORECAMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL.

OSSETT CORPORATION GAS BILL.

SOUTHPORT EXTENSION AND TRAMWAYS BILL.

SOUTHPORT CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

WAKEFIELD CORPORATION MARKET BILL.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCANTILE MARINE (COLOUR TESTS).

Report on the sight-tests used in the Mercantile Marine for 1899 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C.-9248]): Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS).

I. Return of descriptions of qualifications of deputy lieutenants lodged during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

II. Return of deputy lieutenants displaced during 1899, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

INEBRIATES AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

Petition in favour of, of County Council of Renfrew; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1°; and to be printed. (No. 42.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock, to Monday next, Eleven of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 30th March, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely—

Higham Ferrers Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

HARTLEPOOL GAS AND WATER BILL.

SOUTHPORT EXTENSION AND TRAMWAYS BILL.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

WAKEFIELD CORPORATION MARKET BILL.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL.

As amended, considered; a Clause added; Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

MARKET WEIGHTON DRAINAGE AND NAVIGATION BILL.

As amended, considered; a Clause added; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ABANDONMENT) BILL.

To be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April.

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords] [STAMP DUTIES].

Resolution reported:—"That it is expedient to authorise the imposition of the following Stamp Duties upon certain Memorials under any Act of the present session relating to the Universal Life Assurance Society, namely, for and upon the First Memorial enrolled of the names of persons who shall be deemed, held, and taken to be Trustees of the Society, the sum of Five pounds; and upon every such Memorial in which the name of any person shall for the first time be inserted as a Trustee of the Society, the sum of Five pounds.

Resolution agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Universal Life Assurance Society Bill [Lords] that they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Allerton, Much

Woolton, Little Woolton, and Childwall, Barnet, Barnstaple, Birkenhead (Extension), Bonchurch, Boston, Brierfield, Egremont, Hyde, and Sudbury, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Allerton, Much Woolton, Little Woolton, and Childwall, Barnet, Barnstaple, Birkenhead (Extension), Bonchurch, Boston, Brierfield, Egremont, Hyde, and Sudbury," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 160.]

HASTINGS TRAMWAYS BILL.

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 3).

Mr. HOBHOUSE reported from the Committee on Group 3 of Railway, etc., Bills, That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

HAMILTON, MOTHERWELL, AND WISHAW TRAMWAYS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).

Mr. JEFFREYS reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills, That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Reported [Parties do not proceed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A).

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills, That Sir George Pilkington, one of the Members of the said Committee was not present during the Sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Corporation of the City of Lincoln with respect to tramways, and to authorise the Corporation to construct new tramways, and to work tramways within and without the city; and to borrow money; and for other purposes." Lincoln Corporation (Tramways) Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Melvin Batchlor Church for the manufacture of an improved compound for coating and decorating walls and other surfaces, and for the production of casts or mouldings, and for analogous purposes. Church's Patent Bill [Lords].

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords],—That they have come to the following resolution, viz.: "That it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament."

LINCOLN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

CHURCH'S PATENT BILL [Lords].

Read the first time: and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Mr. OLDROYD reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills, That, to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday, 3rd April, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT GAS.

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

COLONIAL SOLICITORS BILL.

Petition of the Incorporated Society of Law Agents in Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Brechin, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY (EXEMPTION FROM RATES).

Petition from Plumstead, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF SALE) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING ACTS AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Alnwick, against; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Peterborough, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899.

Petition from Plumstead, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME.

Petition from Baildon, for adoption; to lie upon the Table.

PETROLEUM BILL.

Petition from Manchester and Salford, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (SCOTLAND) LATER OPENING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Greenwich; Eastbourne; and St. Leonards; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL AND SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition from Newcastle-on-Tyne, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Haughton; Silksworth; Ryhope (two); Murton; Hylton; Hetton (two); North Biddick; Fulwell; Silksworth (two); South Hetton; Hetton Downs; Newbottle; Coxgreen; Easington Lane; Weston-super-Mare; Burradon; Berwick-upon-Tweed; Newcastle-on-Tyne (three); Felling; Wardley; Brandon; Whitley Bay; Forest Gate; and Shepherd's Bush; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (twenty-one); and Attercliffe; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from West Kent; Wheatley; Churchill; Salford; Sheffield; and Camberwell; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY.

Return [presented 29th March] to be printed. [No. 115.]

MERCANTILE MARINE (COLOUR TESTS).

Copy presented, of Report on the sight tests used in the Mercantile Marine for the year ended 31st December, 1899 (in continuation of [C. 9248]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury

whether he is aware that Father Simon Knapp, a friar of the Carmelite Church at Kensington, has volunteered his services as a Roman Catholic chaplain to the Roman Catholic soldiers now serving in South Africa; and that he has been appointed by the War Office as a chaplain, and sailed in the "Briton" for South Africa; and seeing that Father Knapp is a member of a religious community which under a penal statute is an illegal monastic order, will Her Majesty's Government give facilities for the passage of a Bill now before Parliament, or take such steps as may be necessary to remove the disabilities under which certain Roman Catholic religious communities are penalised in Great Britain and Ireland.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. With regard to the second paragraph the hon. Member must be well aware that on general grounds it is neither customary nor convenient to attempt to deal with these matters by Private Members' Bills. I may, perhaps, add that as far as I can understand the Bill, a copy of which the hon. Member was good enough to send me, the object he desires would not be furthered by it.

TRANSPORT — ALIEN SEAMEN IN BRITISH SHIPS—THE "CASPIAN."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state if the British steamer "Caspian" has been chartered by the Government for the purpose of conveying stores to South Africa; whether he is aware that this vessel carries a crew of thirty-two hands all told, the only British subjects employed on the vessel being the officers, seven in number, the remainder being foreigners of eight different nationalities; whether he is aware that some of these foreigners are Germans, Belgians, and Hollanders, and if he intends to take steps to insist on vessels which are employed by the Government being manned by British subjects or seamen who have homes in the United Kingdom; whether he is aware that the able seamen are paid at the rate of £3 10s. per month, whereas the current rate of wages for seamen from British ports is £4 10s.; and whether, in hiring transports, he will give the preference to ships carrying British crews.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. The "Caspian" was engaged as a freight ship for the conveyance of a full cargo of supplies to South Africa, through the Admiralty agents, from the Union Steamship Company, by whom she was chartered from the owners. I am informed by the owners that when she sailed for the Cape she had her full complement of thirty-six, of whom fourteen were British subjects. The Admiralty is charged with the duty of conveying troops and stores when required with the utmost expedition to their destination. It would not be possible to take the action suggested in the third paragraph in the case of freight ships without serious and perhaps fatal delay. The statement as to the wages paid is correct, but I have no information as to the current rate of wages at British ports. With regard to the fifth paragraph of the question the answer is in the affirmative, provided the ships are otherwise equal.

MARTIAL LAW AT THE CAPE — ALLEGED MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE.

MR. HAZELL (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the alleged miscarriage of justice in connection with the administration of martial law at the Cape; whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the matter, with a view to steps being taken to prevent recurrence in the future; whether, in particular, he has information as to the case of F. A. Botha, aged upwards of sixty, who was arrested on his farm near the Modder River on 27th November last, and sent thence about 700 miles to Cape Town, whence he was returned to the Modder River; whether he was kept in gaol till 9th January, when he was convicted by a military court on the evidence of four native servants, who said the accused had told them that he would lend a wagon and oxen to the Free State burghers, though it was not alleged that he ever did lend them, and whether the accused denied the charge; whether on this evidence Botha was sentenced to two years hard labour, and is now treated as an ordinary convict, doing hard labour in the Hope Town Gaol

under the guard of Kaffir constables; and whether similar cases have been brought to his notice.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Secretary of State for War cannot undertake to question the decisions of competent military tribunals in areas within which martial law has been proclaimed; but if the hon. Member will place a question on the Paper, I shall be glad to explain the constitution and procedure of such tribunals.

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR FORCES — ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he is in a position to give in detail the contributions of India to the war in South Africa as regards men, horses, and military equipment; and whether, in view of the value of India in the military defence of the Empire demonstrated in this war, the Government will give an opportunity for the discussion of the claim of the Government of India for relief from some portion of its home military charges, before the Indian Budget discussion at the end of the session.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As far as I am able to furnish details, the contributions of India to the war in South Africa up to date are approximately as follows:- Officers and men (British), 8,215; natives (non-combatants), 5,717; horses, 6,700; mules and ponies, 1,510; field guns, 50; Maxim, naval, and machine guns, 15. There are besides, artillery waggons, ambulance carts, and a large supply of boots, saddles, haversacks, warm coats, tents, and other equipment. All supplies of Indian material and animals were paid for on terms not unfavourable to the factories or agencies furnishing them. The subject of the home military charges was specially referred to the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India, whose Report has not yet been received.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): When does the noble Lord expect that the long delayed Report will be received?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no control over the Commission. I understand that we are very shortly to receive the Report, with the subsidiary Reports of the individual members of the Commission.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: Is there any chance of the Report being received before Easter?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I know nothing about it. I have no control in the matter.

TELEGRAMS TO AND FROM SOLDIERS ON SERVICE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in order to allay the anxiety of thousands of families in this country who have relatives at the war in South Africa, he will open negotiations with the directors of the Eastern Telegraph Company and its allies for sending messages and replies (prepaid) by telegraph not exceeding ten words at a total cost of half a guinea, or even a guinea; and whether he will represent to the cable companies that the concessions they have already made in this direction for the soldiers would be greatly enhanced if arrangements for these social or family messages were embodied in a reply message of the kind indicated at a fixed charge.

*MR. WYNDHAM; The Eastern Telegraph Company recently of their own accord reduced the charges for telegrams from four to two shillings a word, and the Secretary of State for War is not prepared to call upon the company for any further concession. I ought to add that the number of telegrams is already so great as to lead to frequent blocks on the line.

CONDUCT OF THE WAR—MEASURES FOR THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING.

SIR J. LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can inform the House whether, since Kimberley and Ladysmith were relieved, any expedition has been sent or special measures taken by Lord Roberts for the relief of the gallant defenders of Mafeking.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am precluded on military grounds from giving any indication of Lord Roberts' plans.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—BOOTS.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, of 226 pairs of boots supplied by a well-known Government contractor for the use in South Africa of the volunteer contingent of the Worcestershire Regiment, over forty pairs were condemned as utterly unfit for use within four days of delivery, whether 100 more pairs were shortly afterwards condemned for the same reason, and whether the remaining pairs were of an inferior quality usually sold for one-third the price paid in this case; and whether a report to this effect has been received by the War Office; and, if so, whether the contractor who supplied such defective goods is still on the War Office list, and whether, if a report to the above effect has not yet been received, an inquiry will be made into the circumstances of the above contract.

*MR. WYNDHAM: A report has been received of the unsatisfactory character of the supplies furnished by Messrs. Samuels to the Volunteer contingent of the Worcestershire Regiment. The order was given by the Volunteer Corps, and not through the War Office. The Contract Branch was not consulted. The goods would be paid for out of the corps funds. In consequence of their conduct in this matter the contractors have been removed from the War Office list. They have not had any dealings with the Department for some years.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND—WELSH GUARD OF HONOUR.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the 3rd Volunteer Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, furnished guards of honour on the occasion of the visit last year of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York to Wales, and that this battalion has a company now at Holyhead, and that the officer commanding the battalion offered a guard of honour to consist of 100 men, whether he will explain why arrangements are being made to convey men of the Derbyshire Militia to act as guard of honour; and, whether it is possible to alter these arrangements.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that there was not only an offer from the 3rd Welsh Battalion, but an offer from the 2nd Welsh Battalion, including the services of 118 men now waiting orders for service in South Africa? Why were these two offers set aside and the Derbyshire Militia chosen? Was the selection made on military or personal grounds?

*MR. WYNDHAM: This matter rests entirely in the hands of the general officer commanding the district. He, however, has detailed a guard of honour of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion Welsh Fusiliers as well as of the 3rd Battalion Derbyshire Regiment. In reply to the hon. Member for Anglesey, I have to say that I have no knowledge as to the offer of the second battalion. I must remind the hon. Member that Her Majesty is travelling privately from this country to Ireland, and therefore there are no guards of honour at all by command. The presence of any guard is a matter of local arrangement between the residents and the general officer commanding the district. I think this will show the hon Member that these are matters which should be left to the general officer commanding the district and that we should not endeavour to take them out of his hands. I may also point out that Derbyshire is in the north-western district command.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES: Can fifty men form a guard of honour for the Queen?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I have explained that there is no regulation guard of honour in question. Her Majesty is travelling privately through the north-western district, and the inhabitants have represented to the general officer commanding that some of the troops in the district should be present, and that the honour has been allocated between one district in England and one district in Wales.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS AT HYDERABAD.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in the existing dearth of trained artillery officers, it is possible to obtain the services of Royal Artillery officers at present employed with the Nizam's forces in Hyderabad, and especially of

have attached to Hyderabad contingent batteries armed with smooth-bore guns.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. The local artillery captain and four subalterns employed with the field artillery of the Hyderabad contingent are not available for service elsewhere.

ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF TIMOTHY COUNIHAN.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Timothy Counihan, who served thirty years in the Third Brigade, South Irish Division, Royal Artillery (Militia), and was then (in the year 1887) discharged as an invalid six months before his engagement terminated, after having received five good conduct badges, and with his character certified "very good"; is he aware that he was invalided owing to an injury to his foot by a shell whilst in the execution of his duty; and whether, in view of the fact that this man is unable to follow his trade owing to the injury thus received, and that he has since been several times in hospital from the same cause, and is over sixty-three years of age, a pension will now be allowed to him or some compensation made to him for the injury.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): This case was thoroughly and repeatedly considered both before and after the man's discharge from the Militia. I regret that it cannot now be reopened.

CRIMEAN PENSIONS—CASE OF PATRICK HENNESSY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Patrick Hennessy, whose regimental number is 1780, enlisted in 1846 in the 95th Foot, and served through the Crimean war, and was engaged in all the battles, and wounded at the battle of Inkerman; also that he served throughout the Indian Mutiny, and was specially noted for his bravery in action by General Sir H. Rose, and in China for four years, and also in Egypt, Malta, and Africa; and whether, seeing that Patrick Hennessy is now aged 77 years, and was discharged in 1868 with a pension of 8d. per day after twenty-one years of active and foreign service, the War Office authorities will now consider his case with the view of increasing substantially his present pension of only 8d. per day.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No, Sir. I have told the hon. Member before that the case cannot be reconsidered.

MR. FLAVIN: Did not the hon. Gentleman request me to again put this question to him?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I do not remember doing so. I told him the case could not be reconsidered; that we had looked carefully into it, and that nothing more could be done.

MR. FLAVIN: But does the hon. Member not remember that last October he asked me to put off the question, in order that it might be reconsidered?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have no recollection of it. But I repeat the case of this man has been looked into over and over again, and nothing more can be done.

MR. FLAVIN: Who is to support this old soldier?

[No answer was given.]

THE PARIS EXHIBITION—SUNDAY OPENING.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kircudbright): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the rule recently created by the British Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition which has made it imperative on all English exhibitors to uncover and display their goods on every day when the exhibition is open, and for all hours of the day, including specifically the Lord's Day; whether he is aware that in the Paris Exhibitions of 1867, 1878, and 1889, exhibitors from Great Britain have as a rule steadfastly refused to exhibit on Sundays; whether the President of the United States of America has directed the United States Commissioner to prevent as far as possible the exhibition of goods from America on the Lord's Day. And whether the Government will use their efforts with the

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxvii., p. 731 (26th October, 1899); Vol. lxxviii., p. 712 (6th February, 1900).

British Commissioners to secure as far as possible the non-exhibition of goods on the Lord's Day.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The matter has been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State, but it is a question for consideration by the Royal Commission, and does not fall within the competence of the Foreign Office. The attention of the Secretary of the Royal Commission has, however, been drawn to the subject.

HONG KONG—REPORTED ABDUCTION OF A CHINESE REFORMER.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether Kang-Yu-Wei, the Chinese reformer, is living under British protection at Hong Kong, and whether he was abducted on Tuesday last from Hong Kong and taken to Canton; and whether he can state what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in order to secure his immediate release.

MR. BRODRICK: The Government have received no information, but we have telegraphed to inquire.

DISTURBANCES IN SHANTUNG AND PECHILI.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will state whether the country round Tien-tsin is greatly disturbed; and whether concerted action by the Powers is contemplated.

MR. BRODRICK: Disturbances have taken place in the provinces of Shantung and Pechili stated to be due to the action of secret societies. Representations have been made to the Chinese Government on the subject by the foreign representatives, including Her Majesty's Minister, and the Government of Shantung has been recalled and a new one appointed. Two of Her Majesty's ships have been sent to Taku for the protection of British lives and property.

CABLE COMPANIES' CHARGES.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Indo-European Telegraph Company, respectively, pay to Her Majesty's Government, in accordance with the terms of the International Telegraph Convention, the sum of 2d. per word as terminal tax on all extra-European telegrams intended for the United Kingdom and reaching this country by the above-named companies' cables, and what is the total amount due to Her Majesty's Government from these companies individually during the year 1898-9 for this terminal tax; and whether he would state the nature and terms of any agreement which, as indicated in the evidence of the Eastern Telegraph Company's representatives before the Pacific Cable Committee, may have been come to in connection with this terminal tax between the Post Office authorities and this company, as well as the number of extra European messages, and the average number of words in each such message having reached this country through the cables of the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Indo-European Telegraph Company respectively, and the amount actually received from each of them during 1898-9.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews Burghs) (for Mr. HANBURY): My hon. friend has been misinformed. The International Convention does not require the companies to make the payment he describes, and no agreement in connection with it has been come to with the Post Office. As to the extra-European telegrams reaching this country by the companies' lines, the Post Office is not in possession of the particulars he indicates.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Indo-European Telegraph Company pay to Her Majesty's Government the covenanted transit rate of three halfpence per word on all extra-European messages reaching the United Kingdom by the above-mentioned companies' cables and destined to Transatlantic addresses; the total amount due to Her Majesty's Government during 1898-9; the total number of such messages: the average number of words per message for this period; and in the event of any agreement having been come to between the Post Office authorities and these two cable companies individually, whether he would state the nature and particulars of such agreement, and the amount received by

Her Majesty's Government from them of a sum of three pence for the year [illegible]?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN (for Mr. E. [illegible]): The answer is in the negative. The messages are handed over direct to the Transatlantic companies and are neither handled, counted, nor charged for by the Post Office.

DIVIDENDS OF GOVERNMENT STOCK: THE DATES OF PAYMENT.

MR. M'LAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if there is any reason founded on public advantage why the Government should adhere, for Government payments, and in the case of Crown leases for receipt of rent, to the ancient quarter days of 5th January, 5th April, 5th July, and 5th October, seeing that the Gregorian Calendar was adopted by Act of Parliament in the reign of George II., under which the quarter days universally recognised by Her Majesty's subjects fall twelve days earlier in each case; whether he is aware that there is always at the end of June and December a demand for money in London, and that the market in order to tide over the turn of the half year has to borrow from the Bank of England until the Consol dividends are paid on the 5th July and 5th January; and whether he can see his way to modify the present system so that money arising from dividends on Government securities may be available for market purposes just before the close of each commercial half year, and so diminish the stringency that now prevails at these periods.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not think the proposed change would be desirable. It could not be introduced without legislation, as the dividend days are fixed by Act of Parliament, and it would give rise to a great deal of trouble and complication. One of the results would be the imposition of a very heavy charge on the finances of the year of change, as in that year there would practically be, roughly speaking, five quarterly payments to be made.

FACTORY ACTS PARTICULARS CLAUSE.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state how many trades the Factory and Workshop Acts have been extended since 1895, and how long the inquiries have taken in each case.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Six orders extending the Factory provisions of the Factory Act of 1895 have been made, and another is at the present moment under consideration. In an affair I cannot say how long each of the inquiries has taken. Having regard to the number and complexity of the points involved in these cases, the inquiries may reasonably be somewhat protracted.

GUY'S HOSPITAL — PRESCRIPTIONS ORDERED BY UNQUALIFIED STUDENTS — CASE OF MABEL BLANCH.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the evidence given at a coroner's inquest at Bermondsey, on Friday, 15th March, on an infant named Mabel Blanch, that the child was seen and prescribed for by an unqualified student at Guy's Hospital and subsequently died; and whether he will make a representation to the authorities of Guy's Hospital that effect should forthwith be given to the rider of the jury that patients should in every case be examined by a qualified medical man and a record kept of the prescriptions.

SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I find that the facts are as stated in the question, except that the jury do not appear to have believed that any prescription was given. I am assured by the authorities of Guy's Hospital that it is entirely against the regulations for unqualified students to treat patients on their own responsibility; and that on the day following the child's death the case was brought before them and the student dealt with by them.

PORTSKEWETT SEVERN TUNNEL SCHOOL.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the Portskewett Severn Tunnel School was closed about three months ago, owing to the death of a sub-

scriber on whose contributions the school had almost entirely depended for local support; whether since the school was closed more than 200 children have had no opportunity of securing education; and whether he can state what steps the Department propose to take in order to provide suitable school accommodation, and whether, if another small school board be formed, he can give the population of the district over which such board would have jurisdiction.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (SIR J. GORST, Cambridge University): The answer to the first paragraph of the question is in the affirmative. Since the closing 200 children have had no public elementary school to which they could reasonably have access. There is no course open to the Education Department but to establish a school board. This will be done forthwith. The population of the Portskewett school district was 1,190 at the census of 1891.

SCHOOL BOARD JURISDICTION.

MR. GRAY: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education how many school boards are now existing in England and Wales, and of them how many have jurisdiction over districts containing a population of less than 500 persons; and can he state how many school attendance committees there are, and of them how many have jurisdiction in districts having a population of less than 500 persons.

SIR J. GORST: In England there are 2,184 and in Wales 343 school boards—total, 2,527. Of these 531 in England, and 62 in Wales have jurisdiction over populations not exceeding 500. In England there are 740 school attendance committees for boroughs, urban district councils, and poor law unions; in Wales there are 52 such committees. None of them has jurisdiction over less than 1,000 population, and most of them have populations of from 2,000 to 20,000, and upwards.

POSTMEN'S FEDERATION—REFUSAL OF LEAVE TO EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the application of the general secretary to the Postmen's Federation for leave of absence to enable him to attend meetings of the executive of the Federation, to be held on the 29th, 30th, and 31st instant, was refused, although leave of absence was given to other members of the executive who reside in London districts; and whether, in view of the fact that the General Post Office authorities always profess a readiness to give facilities to the officers of the various associations of employees to conduct the business of these bodies, and in view of the importance of the secretary of the executive being present, he will see that leave is given them to attend.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): It is the case that the application referred to was refused, under well understood rules, which my right hon. friend will be glad to explain to the hon. Member

BIRMINGHAM TELEGRAPH CLERKS' GRIEVANCES.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain on what grounds Mr. Lacon, a telegraphist in the Birmingham Post Office and secretary to the local branch of the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association, has been stopped in the efficiency barrier; and whether as it is admitted that Mr. Lacon is a capable operator, the Postmaster General will investigate the case with a view to discover the cause which has led to this punishment.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): When the question of Mr. Lacon's increment came up for consideration in July last the postmaster felt unable for for the time being, to furnish the necessary certificate to enable Mr. Lacon to pass the efficiency bar on the ground that, although a capable officer, he had habitually exhibited a spirit of insubordination and indisposition to submit to authority. Under the recommendation of the Tweedmouth Committee, no officer is allowed to pass the efficiency bar without a certificate of the excellence of his conduct as well as his ability to perform the highest duties of his class, and in fixing the bar at the comparatively high point (40s. a week), the Committee stated that they held in

special view the purpose that it should be rigorously enforced.

LIVERPOOL POST OFFICE—FINES FOR LATE ATTENDANCE.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he is aware that the new arrangement for the disposal of the fines inflicted on Liverpool postmen for late attendances, whereby the staff have no longer a voice in the decision as to how the money shall be appropriated, has resulted in breaking up the men's organised effort to help the local Saturday Hospital Fund; and if so, will he consider the advisability of repealing the new regulation.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The Tweedmouth Committee stated in their Report—

"We are informed that it is the custom to distribute the fines among the employees, and it often happens that they are returned to the very men from whom they have been exacted. For the future it is recommended that fines levied by way of punishment be applied to some purpose for the general benefit of post office servants or of their families, to be approved by the Postmaster General."

In carrying out this recommendation the Postmaster General issued instructions that the money was to be administered by the local postmasters and to be devoted, subject to his approval, to (1) some charitable or benevolent institution for the general benefit of Post Office servants; (2) to local institutions of benefit to the staff; (3) to the relief of members of the staff—whether on the establishment or not—who through no fault of their own are in necessitous circumstances, or to afford temporary relief in cases of distress among widows and orphans of deceased members of the staff. At Liverpool the postmen have not recommended to the postmaster that any of the money should be devoted to the Hospital Saturday Fund, and it is not quite clear whether such a method of disposing of it would be altogether consistent with the directions above laid down. But the postmaster would no doubt give due weight to any representation from the staff on the subject.

LIVERPOOL ASSISTANT POSTMEN.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why two assistant postmen at Liverpool, hitherto in receipt of 15s. weekly while engaged on hoist duties, have been removed in order to make room for pensioned sailors, and are now only receiving 12s. 6d. and 11s. 3d. respectively per week, although one is twenty-two and the other twenty-three years of age; and whether steps can be taken to allow the men at least an increase of wages.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The two assistant postmen referred to were temporarily employed on hoist duties only until permanent arrangements for those duties could be made. They were then returned to their former duties, but in a week's time they were employed as substitutes for postmen with wages of 18s. a week, and they are still so acting.

SCOTTISH COMMISSIONER OF LUNACY.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state under what circumstances the Commissioner in Lunacy for Scotland, who recently retired, was granted superannuation allowance on the basis of thirty-five years service, although his actual service was only twenty-eight years.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): Seven years were added to this officer's services under Section 4 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, which enables a number of years, not exceeding twenty, to be added for pension purposes to the actual service in the case of officers requiring "professional or other peculiar qualifications, not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service."

SCOTTISH POLICE—ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE — CASE OF LAWRENCE HENDERSON.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether Lawrence Henderson, merchant, Leith, against whom a charge was made of falsifying the books and embezzling the funds of Lawrence Henderson, Sons, and Co., Limited, of which he was the managing director, who absconded from this country in consequence of that charge, and for whose arrest a reward was offered, returned to this country on 25th February, and spent

several days in Glasgow without any steps being taken for his arrest, and whether the Procurator Fiscal of Midlothian issued instructions that the warrant which had already been issued for his apprehension was not to be put in force; if so, why was not this done; why instructions were not given to watch Henderson's movements so as to prevent his again leaving this country; and whether information of Henderson's being in this country was communicated to the Procurator Fiscal on 28th February; if so, why instructions were not again issued to put the warrant in force until 6th March, and whether the original information against Henderson was lodged with the police authorities while he was still residing in Edinburgh; if so, why steps were not taken to prevent his leaving this country.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): By telegram of 17th February, and again by letter dated Philadelphia, 16th February, and received 26th February, Henderson, for whose apprehension a warrant had been granted, informed the Procurator Fiscal of his intention to surrender, stating that he would sail from New York on 24th February for Glasgow, reaching Edinburgh eleven days later. In these circumstances it was not thought necessary to put the warrant in force in the meantime. On 1st March the Procurator Fiscal was informed by the police that Henderson had reached Liverpool on the 25th February. This excited suspicion, and after inquiry instruction was given for his apprehension, which, however, has not been effected. Henderson had left Edinburgh before the original warrant was issued, and no information has been obtained that he was subsequently seen in Glasgow.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: Were any steps taken to watch him at Liverpool?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: As soon as it transpired that he had arrived a day before the one announced, inquiries were made, and when the warrant was about to be put in force he was gone. We have no information that he was enabled to get hold of any money.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that aiding and developing spinning, weaving, and other home industries, the breeding of live stock, and poultry rearing, and the aiding and developing of dairy farming are amongst the duties of the Congested Districts Board, will he state what means are adopted to make known amongst the people living in the congested area the facilities which the Board are prepared to offer; and whether any Circulars dealing more especially with stock breeding, poultry rearing, and bee-keeping are issued by the Board for distribution amongst the people; and, if not, will he consider the expediency of issuing some such Circulars printed in Gaelic and English.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that they have used their best endeavours to make known their objects by sending a copy of their first Report to all county and parish councils, by distributing seed and bill posters in various parishes, by conference with representative men, and in other ways. They recently issued a pamphlet upon potato spraying, and are about to issue one on poultry, as well as leaflets about stock management and ordinary cattle diseases.

MR. WEIR: Was the pamphlet in English or Gaelic?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: As my hon. friend knows, there are very few people there who cannot understand English.

MIGRATIONS OF SCOTTISH CROFTERS AND COTTARS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state how many crofters and cottars have been migrated, with the assistance of the Congested Districts Board, from the congested districts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to other districts.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed that up to the present time no crofters have been actually migrated. The whole difficulties connected with the subject will be dealt with in the forthcoming Report of the Congested Districts Board.

FISHERY HARBOURS—COLLIESTON.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been directed to the fact

that most of the fishermen of Collieston have deserted that village and migrated to Torry, because, amongst other things, the harbour is not adaptable to the larger class of boats now indispensable to successful line fishing; whether the Fishery Board has spent a sum of about £3,000 on the harbour now deserted; whether it has been the policy of the Fishery Board to refuse help to the larger class of harbours, such as Stonehaven, which could with some improvement be admirably adapted to the modern class of boats, on the ground that these were not purely fishing harbours; and whether this policy would, in the light of such cases as Collieston, be still continued.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Fishery Board that it is not a fact, as stated by the hon. Member in the first paragraph of his question, that most of the fishermen of Collieston have deserted that village. The Fishery Board are assisting the fishermen and their proprietrix, at their most urgent request, to erect a harbour at Collieston, which is now approaching completion, and the fishermen appear satisfied that the harbour will be quite sufficient and suitable for their boats. The Secretary for Scotland sees no reason why the Fishery Board should alter their present policy, which is, to a large extent, guided by statute.

ABERDEENSHIRE FISHERIES—OLD SLAINS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the entire population of the fishing village of Old Slains, Aberdeenshire, recently migrated to Torry, Aberdeen, in consequence of the difficulty which they have experienced in prosecuting their calling for the want of suitable harbour accommodation; and, in view of the fact that the fishermen of Avoch, Ross-shire, recently sustained loss from a like cause, and that demands for suitable harbour accommodation are continually made by fishermen on the coasts of the north of Scotland, will he consider the expediency of appointing a Committee to inquire into the question of harbour accommodation in Scotland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that my right hon. friend has answered a question on the subject matter of this very fully.* With regard to the Committee asked for, I am afraid I can hold out no hope whatever of its appointment.

SCOTTISH LUNACY BOARD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that in the past there has been no difficulty in securing gentlemen in Scotland to undertake the duties of Chairman of the Scottish Lunacy Board without salary, fee, or remuneration beyond travelling expenses, will he state why it is proposed to pay the present chairman; does he propose that all public services in Scotland hitherto honorary shall in future be remunerated; and, seeing that the late chairman of the board gave his services gratuitously, will he say whether any efforts were made to secure the services of an honorary chairman prior to the appointment of the present chairman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The assumption contained in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is not accurate. The Lunacy Board for Scotland remains as it was constituted in 1857, and consists of one unpaid commissioner who acts as chairman of the Board, two medical commissioners who are paid, and two legal commissioners who are unpaid. The duties are now far more onerous, and there is difficulty, of which the hon. Member appears to be unaware, in getting unpaid members. The proposal in the Bill presently before the House is to enable payment to be made to a limited extent to the members of the Commission hitherto unpaid, and is not confined to the chairman. The reply to the second paragraph of the hon. Member's question is in the negative, and to the third, in the affirmative.

RETURN OF SCOTTISH EDUCATION EXPENDITURE.

MR. CROMBIE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether there exists any Return showing the objects on which local authorities spend the sum of £100,000, granted under Section 2 (5) of the Education and Local Taxation (Scotland) Act, 1892; and, if not, whether he will grant such a Return.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The sum granted under the sub-section re-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., p. 1191 (19th March, 1900).

ferred to by the hon. Member was in respect of the financial year ending 31st March, 1899, not £100,000, but £161,912, as shown in the summary Return presented to Parliament last year. No detailed Return of all the objects on which local authorities expend it has been obtained, but it appears from Returns made in this and previous years to the Education Department and the Scotch Office that about £100 is spent on technical education, from £1,000 to £2,000 on miscellaneous schemes of public utility, and the rest in relief of rates.

BALINTORE HARBOUR LIGHT.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Report of the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, dated 27th February, 1899, shows that the light on Balintore Harbour has been so placed that it has been carried away by the sea, necessitating the use of a temporary light by the harbour authorities; and will he state whether arrangements have yet been made for the erection of a permanent light.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I should explain to the hon. Member that the Report to which he refers was made on 21st December, 1899, and not on 27th February, 1899, which latter date is a printer's error in the Parliamentary Paper. From the Report of the engineer to the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses it would appear that in December last the re-erection of the permanent light at Balintore Harbour was then under consideration by the local authority. I have no later information on the subject.

CORK COUNTY—FORESHORE RIGHTS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have recently handed over to Lord Midleton a portion of the foreshore of the Midleton River at Ballinacurra, County Cork, and whether any communication was made to the Cork Harbour Board before this was done; whether it is the practice of the Board of Trade before alienating foreshore to first offer it to the harbour authority or to communicate with that authority, and why this practice was departed from in the present case; whether, as regards the portion of foreshore now given up to Lord Midleton, the Cork Harbour Board had, in or about the year 1884, come to an arrangement with Lord Midleton (who then claimed it) to take a lease of it from him, but were prevented from doing so by the Board of Trade refusing its consent to the lease; whether the Board of Trade are aware that this foreshore has been commonly used by the public for many years, and that any value which it now has arises from the fact that it has been reclaimed by the Harbour Board by depositing rubbish on it; and why, in these circumstances, they handed over the foreshore to Lord Midleton.

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have recently sold to Lord Midleton the Crown right in a piece of land which was formerly foreshore of the Midleton River at Ballinacurra. No communication was addressed to or received from the Cork Harbour Commissioners in this matter prior to an offer to sell having been made to Lord Midleton. It is the usual practice of the Board to consult harbour authorities before dealing with land below high water mark within their jurisdiction, but in the present case the land was above the limit of tidal influence. In 1884 the Board declined to consent to the Harbour Commissioners taking a lease of certain foreshore in the vicinity from Lord Midleton, as it was *prima facie* the property of the Crown. The Board are aware that the land recently sold to Lord Midleton was formerly open to the public, but they have no information as to its having been reclaimed by the Harbour Commissioners, and the Board gave no permission to the Commissioners to deposit rubbish thereon. As Lord Midleton claimed the ownership of the land in question, and wished to utilise it for developing local trade, the Board of Trade decided to convey to him the rights of the Crown, thereby avoiding the risk of expensive litigation.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Did not the interference of the Board of Trade in this matter deprive the authorities of land which they would otherwise have acquired?

MR. RITCHIE: I can only say we took what we believed to be the most beneficial course.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: Why did not the Board of Trade communicate

with the local authorities in the usual manner?

MR. RITCHIE: The practice of the Board of Trade is invariably to communicate with the local authorities when it is a question of land below high water mark. But this was above high water mark.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: So is all land that is any good.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it not the fact that the Cork Harbour Commissioners protested against the sale more than twelve months ago? Did they not say that attempts to improve the land would be in vain while it was in private ownership?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Why was this preference given to Lord Midleton? Does the right hon. Gentleman know?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Aye, does he know?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, I do know. Lord Midleton claimed that this land was his and not the Crown's; and after taking legal advice we came to the conclusion that, in order to prevent long, expensive, and probably fruitless litigation, we would give way.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the land is claimed by the Cork Harbour Board——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is impossible to follow this matter further in question and answer.

MR. FLYNN: This is a flagrant job; and we shall call attention to the matter on the Estimates.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is it intended to take any steps to protect the public interest?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the proceedings at Blackburn on the 27th inst., at which a workhouse inmate named Edward Murray, who said he had spent 63 years in England, was ordered by the magistrates to be removed to Kilmana, County Mayo; and will the Government take steps to prevent the deportation of paupers (who have spent the greater portion of their lives in England) to Ireland, and thus burdening the rates of Poor Law unions.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Local Government Board have no information with regard to the case referred to in the question; but, as I have stated on a previous occasion, a Bill is in preparation on the subject of the deportation of paupers from England to Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Pending the introduction and passing of the Bill, could not cases like this stand over?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: That is entirely a matter for the local boards of guardians. The Government has nothing whatever to do with it.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is it not the case this man was born on the same day as the Queen? Is that the reason for deporting him on the occasion of Her Majesty's visit to Ireland?

[No answer was given.]

CASTLEBLANEY UNION DISPENSARY DOCTOR.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Castleblaney Board of Guardians, at their meeting on the 7th instant, refused to pay the substitute of a doctor of one of the dispensary districts of that union when absent at the assizes; and that this is considered a grievance by the Guardians of Castleblaney Union in having to pay the substitute of a doctor who is getting his salary when absent and at the same time earning a fee of £2 2s. per day as well as travelling expenses; and whether he will direct the Local Government Board to order, when dispensary doctors are summoned by the Crown as witnesses, that these doctors will pay their substitutes in the future.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The facts are as stated in the first paragraph. The Local Government Board have been advised that a doctor

who is compelled under subpœna to attend a Court of Justice is temporarily incapacitated from performing his duties within the meaning of the Relief Acts, and that the Board of Guardians were bound, therefore, to make provision for the care of the sick poor during his absence by employing and paying a temporary substitute. The doctor, if obliged to pay his substitute out of the expenses he receives as witness would, in many cases, be out of pocket by reason of his obedience to the subpœna. The reply to the last paragraph is in the negative.

IRISH POOR LAW DIETARY SCALES—CARRICKMACROSS WORKHOUSE.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the average cost per inmate per week in Carrickmacross Workhouse for the past year was 3s. 9¼d., while in Monaghan the average cost per inmate was only 2s. 8d. per week; whether he is aware that the same Local Government Board inspector inspects both workhouses, and if he can state why such a disparity was allowed by this inspector in the dietary of these workhouses; whether he is aware that, if the treatment to the paupers of Monaghan Workhouse be correct, the ratepayers of Carrickmacross Union are losing £250 per annum owing to the high average cost in that workhouse; and whether he can state what course he intends to take to relieve the ratepayers of Carrickmacross Union of this high average cost when compared with Monaghan.

MR. ATKINSON: The figures are correctly stated in the first paragraph. The same inspector is in charge of the Unions of Carrickmacross and Monaghan. Differences in the average cost of maintenance in one workhouse as compared with another may obviously be due to several causes; for example, the relative consumption of stimulants, the terms upon which contracts for workhouse supplies have been accepted, the proportion of sick patients. These are not matters in which an inspector of the Local Government Board exercises any responsibility, nor has he power to enforce the adoption of a particular scale of dietary, though he may make recommendations in this last-mentioned respect for the consideration of the guardians. The fact that the cost of maintenance in Monaghan is relatively low does not necessarily prove that there is a waste of £250 a year in Carrickmacross Workhouse, as the question assumes. In reply to the concluding paragraph, the Local Government Board do not propose to interfere with the guardians in the matter.

CARRICKMACROSS URBAN AND RURAL BOUNDARIES.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Carrickmacross Board of Guardians unanimously passed a resolution that the Local Government Board would reconsider the adjustment made by Colonel O'Hara between Carrickmacross Urban and Carrickmacross Rural Districts; whether he is aware that Carrickmacross Urban District, with a valuation of £3,010, has only to pay £40 4s. 5d., while Carrickmacross Rural District with a valuation of £5,500, has to bear £102; whether he is aware that, according to the statement of the Clerk of the Union of Carrickmacross, Colonel O'Hara only remained there half an hour to adjust the affairs of sixteen electoral divisions; and whether he will direct a further inquiry into the matters complained of.

MR. ATKINSON: The resolution referred to in the first paragraph has been received. The figures are as stated in the second paragraph. It is to be observed, however, that there are many items chargeable wholly upon rural divisions, and others upon the urban division, which would affect an apportionment of the total debits based on valuation alone. I am unable to say how long Colonel O'Hara remained at Carrickmacross. A lengthened stay was apparently not required, inasmuch as the adjustment is made upon figures which were certified by the auditor at his audit for the half-year ended March, 1899, and all these figures were obtainable in the office of the Local Government Board. As no error in the figures has been shown, it is not intended to hold a further inquiry as suggested.

MULLINGAR COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

MR. T. B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether the sub-sheriff of Westmeath has an office in the county court house at Mullingar with a notice on the door marked "Private"; and, if so, is the

sheriff's office a private one or a public one; whether the Distributor of Stamps for the King's County District has his office in the county court house at Mullingar, with the sign "District Stamp Office" over the door; and, if so, does he pay a rent for such office; and, if not, by what right does he use the public building for his private business; and whether the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the County Westmeath conducts part of his business as such clerk through the sub-sheriff; and, if so, whether it is in the interest of the public that the sub-sheriff should have access to and control of the Peace Office.

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware whether the facts are as stated in this question. The allocation of the apartments in the court-house is entirely a matter for arrangement between the High Sheriff and the local authorities, and the Executive Government have no power to interfere.

MR. T. B. CURRAN: Then may he let lodgings if he chooses?

[No answer was given.]

CORK DISTRICT ASYLUM—CRIMINAL LUNATICS.

MR. CREAN (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, since January 1897, criminal lunatics to the number of twenty-six have been transferred to the Cork District Lunatic Asylum; and whether it is legal to transfer criminal lunatics to district lunatic asylums; and, if so, should they be chargeable on the rates.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Since January, 1897, twenty-eight criminal lunatics have been transferred to the Cork District Lunatic Asylum. They were nearly all cases of short sentence, and ceased to be criminal lunatics properly speaking within a very short time—usually not more than a few weeks—of their transfer. It is legal to transfer such lunatics to district asylums under the provisions of the Acts 1 Vic. cap. 27, and 38 and 39 Vic. cap. 67, s. 13. When so transferred, one-half the cost of their maintenance, approximately, is paid by the Imperial Exchequer; the balance only falls on the local rates.

MR. CREAN: Will that be done in connection with the cases to which I have referred?

MR. ATKINSON: Certainly.

CORK COUNTY LAND HOLDINGS—SUB-LETTING.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of a holding purchased under the Land Purchase Acts situate in the County Cork, the Land Commission have recently permitted the tenant purchaser to permanently sublet the whole holding at a substantial rent as an ordinary agricultural holding, thereby recreating the relation of landlord and tenancy in the holding; whether the Land Commission intend as a general practice to waive the prohibition of sub-letting in the case of holdings purchased under the Land Purchase Acts, and to permit the purchasers at their pleasure to become landlord; what the reasons for allowing sub-letting in this particular case were; and whether the person to whom this holding was sub-let will himself be entitled to purchase the holding under the Land Purchase Acts.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): This question does not contain sufficient information to enable the Land Commissioners to identify the particular case to which reference is made. If the hon. Member will furnish me with the name of the tenant purchaser and the townland in which the holding is situate I will call for a further Report in the matter.

FLAX GROWING IN IRELAND.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he has taken any steps to instruct the people of Ireland in the growth of flax, or if he will see to this matter during the present season for sowing flax.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. PLUNKETT, Dublin County, S.): No steps have yet been taken in the direction indicated in the question, though inquiries have been made which will enable the Department, when fully constituted, to give early attention to this important matter.

BALLYHEIGUE BAY—SUGGESTED BOATSLIP.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he is aware that the late C. H. Smith, divisional officer at Ballyheigue, County Kerry, reported that large shoals of mackerel, herrings, and other fish appear in Ballyheigue Bay; and whether, with the view of developing the fishing industry in that poor district, a suitable pier or boatslip will be constructed, as suggested by the late Mr. Smith, so as to accommodate and give employment to the large number of fishermen in the district.

MR. PLUNKETT: I am informed that in November, 1897, Mr. Smith, the divisional officer of coastguard, reported that small, not large, shoals of mackerel and herrings had been observed off Ballyheigue at different periods of the autumn season. The question of the construction of a pier or boatslip has on more than one occasion engaged the attention of the Congested Districts Board, who, however, have not seen their way to take any further action in the matter.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this is a most suitable place for the pier? Will he not recommend the Board to undertake this small outlay?

MR. PLUNKETT: I am afraid not. The matter has been fully considered, and the Board came to its decision after a full examination of the proposal.

ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE FOR IRELAND.

*MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in connection with the Royal Veterinary College for Ireland, owing to the fact that out of twenty-eight governors in that institution only four are veterinary surgeons, and also to the fact that of the four veterinary surgeons on the Board none are Roman Catholics; and whether, owing to the very large number of Roman Catholic students and veterinary surgeons in Ireland, steps will be taken to give representation on the Board by the appointment or otherwise of a reasonable number of Roman Catholic veterinary surgeons.

MR. PLUNKETT: A desire has been expressed by some members of the veterinary profession to have a larger representation on the governing body of the Royal Veterinary College of Ireland, but I am not aware that any dissatisfaction exists as to the religious complexion of the existing representation. At present twelve governors are Roman Catholics. Considerations of religion have not entered into the appointments referred to in the question, and it is to be hoped that they will not do so in any future appointments.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why, with four veterinary surgeons on the Board, there is no Catholic amongst them?

MR. PLUNKETT: I suppose through other qualifications.

CLOSURE MOTIONS IN COMMITTEE.

SIR HENRY HOWARTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been drawn to the occasional paralysis of proceedings when the House is in Committee, caused by the fact that in the absence of the Chairman of Committees it is not possible to invoke the closure; and whether he can see his way to cancelling the clause in the Standing Order which restricts the use of the closure to the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, instead of extending its use to any occupant of the Chair for the time being.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I recognise, as the House must recognise, that this is an important matter which may very well engage the attention of the House. I do not think that my hon. friend can ask me to propose an alteration of the Standing Order in the present session. At all events, as at present advised, I should be disinclined to follow any such course.

THE POSTMASTER GENERALSHIP—SUCCESSOR TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that between the passing of the Reform Act of 1867 and 1895 no fewer than eleven gentlemen have held the office of Postmaster General, and of these ten had seats in the House of Commons, and only one, Lord Wolverton, who was Postmaster General for

six months in 1886, was a Member of the House of Lords; and whether, having regard to the duties appertaining to the office of Postmaster General and the constant supervision of the House of Commons over the Postal Department, the Government, in advising Her Majesty on the appointment of a successor to the Duke of Norfolk, will recommend a Member of the House of Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that the hon. Gentleman's statistics in the first paragraph are accurate, but it does not rest with me to recommend to the Crown the person to fill the office, nor should the question be addressed to me.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The gentleman to whom the question ought to be addressed is not in this House. Will the right hon. Gentleman use his potent influence with that gentleman?

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Who has been appointed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: No official information!

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Can the right hon. Gentleman now state when the debate on the Education Code will be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that I can give no information with regard to public business beyond Tuesday next. The amount of business we got through yesterday was much less than I expected, and I shall have to reconsider the general amount of work to be got through before the holidays and the allocation of time most convenient to the House.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): In view of the lamentable loss of life and injuries through accidents to railway servants, and the recommendations of the Royal Commission thereon, cannot the right hon. Gentleman place the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill in such a position as will enable it to be effectively proceeded with—say, first on the Orders of the Day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have every hope and expectation that the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill will pass before the Easter holidays, whenever that may be.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Is it the intention of the Government, following the usual practice, to state the specific measures which must be got through before the House adjourns for Easter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I anticipate that on Monday the Leader of the Opposition, who I hope will then be able to be in his place, will put a question to me on that subject, when I will endeavour to the best of my ability to indicate the business to be got through before the recess.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): When is it proposed to take the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say.

MR. DILLON: Will it be taken on Tuesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If hon. Members desire, I will not press it on that day.

ALIEN SEAMEN IN BRITISH SHIPS.

[MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.]

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, "the imminent despatch by the Government of the steamship 'Caspian' and the steamship 'Sapphire,' with Government stores for Her Majesty's troops in South Africa, though manned in large part by alien seamen"; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen—

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I venture to say, Sir, that this is a most important question. I have several times during the last three months called the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty to the fact that a large number of the vessels employed in the carrying of Government stores to the troops in South Africa have been manned almost entirely by alien sailors and firemen. Now, I want to be very clear upon this

point. I am making no complaint whatever with regard to the vessels that are carrying the troops, because the liners that have conveyed the bulk of the troops are the Union, the Castle, the Cunard, and the White Star line, which are always in ordinary times manned by British subjects. As a matter of fact on all the liners conveying troops there have been very few foreigners indeed. But the vessels I am complaining of are the steamers that have been employed in carrying guns, ammunition and stores for the troops, and if it is so important that the vessels carrying the troops should be manned by British subjects, then I venture to say it is also important that the vessels carrying ammunition and guns for those troops should also be manned by British seamen. Nor yet am I making any complaint of the employment of foreign seamen who have been long resident in this country, and who have earned their living in Great Britain for many years. That is not the kind of foreigner I am complaining of. The class of men I am complaining of are the crews that have been engaged at continental ports, because the wages at the continental ports are £1 or 30s. a month less than those paid at the ports in Great Britain. I was somewhat surprised at the answer which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty gave to the question with regard to the steamer "Caspian." If I understood him aright he said that this vessel was not chartered by the Government, but had been chartered through the Castle line.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MACARTNEY, Antrim, S.): She was not chartered by the Government at all. She was chartered by the owners to the Union Steamship Company, and was taken up by the Government from them.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I do not see any difference between a vessel being engaged in that way and one engaged direct by the Government. The Government will have to pay for it, and should, therefore, have control over it. Consequently the responsibility for manning it rests entirely with the Admiralty, and if the Admiralty had cared to give definite instructions to those who chartered the vessel that she should be manned by British subjects, I venture to say that the charterers would have seen that that was done. Now, how was this vessel manned? I find that she engaged her crew at Antwerp on the 9th March. There were twenty-six men signed on, and of these twenty-five were foreigners composed of nine different nationalities. There is a German carpenter, a Belgian steward, a Greek mess-room steward, a Greek cook, and a German boatswain. Among the able-bodied seamen are an Italian, a Greek, an American, an Austrian, and a Boer Dutchman. Among the ordinary seamen I find a Belgian, and men of four or five other nationalities, the list ending up with a Spanish cook. I say that the idea of a vessel carrying Government stores being manned by natives of countries which have shown marked hostility to this country during the war in South Africa, is a bad one. Apart from that I think it is a most dangerous practice, and one which the Admiralty ought to stop at once. How do we know that Dr. Leyds may not have one of his emissaries on board the ship? During the progress of the voyage out it would be quite possible for such a man when steering the vessel into one of the ports, to make a mistake and run her on to the rocks, with the consequent loss of valuable stores, which it would not be very easy to replace by the time they were required. With regard to the "Sapphire," I believe she was chartered direct to carry stores. I put a question with respect to her yesterday,* and postponed it by request, but by mistake it appears to have disappeared from the Orders of the Day altogether. With regard to this vessel, she was lying in the Tyne. There are a large number of seamen out of employment there at the present time—close upon one thousand British seamen. Yet the owners of this vessel in order to get cheaper labour took her round to Cardiff and got Spaniards and other foreigners to take the place of British seamen. These are not the only vessels I have complained of. I have sent several communications to the Admiralty.

MR. MACARTNEY: Two others.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I think more than two, and the hon. Gentleman has on several occasions promised me that the matter should be inquired into. With regard to the "Anglo-Germanic"——

* See page 680 of this volume.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must confine himself to the cases of the two vessels named in his motion.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I think I have explained sufficiently how the "Caspian" and the "Sapphire" were manned, and now, with the permission of the House, I would just like to say that this is a practice which ought to be stopped at once. I do not know what the hon. Gentleman may say in reply to me. Perhaps he may tell me that foreigners have been engaged because they are more sober and steady, and that consequently discipline can be better maintained among them. If he does say that, I am in a position to answer him. I have had a look at the log-book for the last voyage of the "Caspian." For that voyage she was chartered by the Government to carry mules to the Cape. I find that the crew then engaged also consisted of foreigners, as now. During the progress of that voyage six of the foreigners seemed to have been put in prison for being drunk and disorderly. There are numerous entries in the official log of members of the crew being drunk and refusing to do duty, and I observe one entry on the 14th of the first month of a foreigner being drunk and disorderly, of his using disgusting language to his officers, and of his having to be given over to the police. It is perfectly true that the crew of which I am complaining is not the crew on board the ship at the present time, but I am only using the composition of that crew and their conduct to illustrate that they do not give better service than British seamen. I say that the log of this vessel, while she has been in the service of the Government, goes to prove that they cannot get better service from foreigners than from British seamen, and it is only in that sense that I am using it. The right hon. Gentleman may look on this as a very light matter. I hope he will not; for I can see very clearly that if we were in conflict with a great European Power, and if the vessels conveying our war stores to distant parts of the world were manned in this way, it would be a very serious matter indeed. It would be quite possible for any of those Powers with which we were at war to put their emissaries on board the ships we have chartered and do considerable damage to them. One case has already occurred where one of the friends of the Boers was engaged as a deck hand, and the circumstances connected with that are very suspicious. A vessel chartered by the Government was leaving one of our ports, and one of the sailors who was born a German said he was a citizen of the Transvaal. Two or three days before he was engaged he was boasting amongst a large number of seamen how he would like to see the British defeated in the present war. Well, the vessel was sent to sea, and as she was passing out of port this very man was called to the wheel. He had not been one minute at the wheel when the vessel ran ashore and became a total wreck. I do not say that the man did it deliberately, because I cannot prove it. But there is a good deal of suspicion attached to the whole affair, considering that he should have been speaking so strongly against the British in the present conflict, and that he should have been the man to run the vessel on shore. The unfortunate pilot's certificate was suspended in consequence, and I venture to say that the pilot was not responsible for the loss of that vessel. If Dr. Leyds had been half as smart as he is considered to be he would have had a number of his emissaries on board all our ships carrying guns and stores to South Africa; and had anything happened there would have been consternation at once at the Admiralty, and there would have been general orders issued at once that these aliens were not to be engaged on our transports. We have a special claim to ask Her Majesty's Government to stop this practice of employing foreign seamen on board our ships carrying stores and war material. One of the items on their programme at the General Election was to prevent alien immigration into this country; and that is one of the planks of their platform still. Surely, then, they ought, of all Governments, to put their foot down and say that every vessel carrying Government property shall be manned by British subjects or by foreigners who have been long resident in this country. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will say that there is some difficulty in getting the men, but if he puts that forward as a defence, I want to tell him that we inserted an advertisement in the Cardiff,

Newcastle, and several other papers, and inside twelve hours we had no fewer than 2,000 British seamen registered for employment in transport ships. They were ready and willing to take employment, but could not get it, because the owners thought they could get foreigners on the cheap. It is the duty of the Government to enforce the fair wage resolution of this House; and I do not think it is right to allow owners who charter ships for British service to engage men on the Continent on the cheap. I do not think I need labour the question more fully. I trust we shall have a straightforward answer from the Admiralty; but I want more. I want the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the whole subject, and as to whether it is possible, in the event of a conflict with a great European Power, that we should have all our ships manned with British seamen.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Havelock Wilson.*)

MR. MACARTNEY: The hon. Gentleman must not assume that the Admiralty look upon the manning of the ships of the mercantile marine in a light or casual manner. It is a matter, from every point of view, which has given the Admiralty considerable anxiety. No Department in the State could feel more the importance of the manning of the mercantile marine to a large extent by foreigners than the Department on behalf of which I am now replying. The hon. Gentleman, I am sure, did not intend to lead the House to suppose that in the communications which passed between him and myself anything I have said suggested that I personally have looked upon this as a matter which ought not to be remedied. Now, the gravamen of the hon. Gentleman's complaint is the employment of foreigners on our ships. That is a matter which has been felt, at least so far as the mercantile marine is concerned, for many years. Parliament has not laid it down that owners of ships in the mercantile marine should not, if they chose, employ foreigners, and the Admiralty have therefore dealt with the question as it exists. There is no question raised here of unseaworthiness or undermanning.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I might have raised that question.

MR. MACARTNEY: Now, what is the duty which the Admiralty have to carry out at the present moment? It is the extremely important duty of conveying, with the utmost precision and despatch, stores of all sorts to the troops, and to the transports conveying these troops to South Africa, and to Her Majesty's ships in these distant waters. I think that the House will agree that the utmost despatch is the first duty which lies on the Admiralty, and that they should not from any other motive which may operate on their minds be diverted from that necessary and primary duty. Take the case of the "Caspian." She was taken up by the Admiralty on the 26th February, but she was not chartered by the Admiralty, and, therefore, the Admiralty have no direct relations to the owners. Her owners chartered her on a time charter to the Union Steamship Company, and under that charter the owners are responsible to the Union Steamship Company for the crew, and for the manning of the vessel. Our relations did not bring us into contact with the owners, and, therefore, we had no knowledge of what her crew was composed. It was a matter of imperative urgency with us to get the tonnage required at that moment. The "Caspian," as I have said, was taken up on agreement on 26th February. She arrived at Antwerp on the 1st or 2nd of March. She received orders to proceed to London for the Cape, and I understand, having received these orders, she engaged a fresh crew, the former crew having been discharged at Antwerp according to the articles of the ship. Under these circumstances, everything being legal, and there being no reason to suppose on the part of the Admiralty that the Union Steamship Company, which the hon. Gentleman says is a company of the highest repute, would have offered to us a ship for Government service which was not perfectly capable of carrying out the services required, I submit to the House that in asking the Admiralty at this moment to put into operation a system of administration in regard to the manning of ships of the mercantile marine which Parliament has not yet attempted to enforce in ordinary times, the hon. Gentleman is asking a thing which is utterly impracticable and impossible.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Might I ask if it is not the fact that the Admiralty are putting that principle in operation in regard to ships which are carrying troops?

MR. MACARTNEY: No, sir. We have made certain stipulations with regard to the transports taken up for the conveyance of troops. These vessels are taken up on time charter, and there is all the difference in the world between the conditions of a time charter and the agreement which was made in regard to the "Caspian" and other ships on tonnage or freight. During the period that is run on a time charter the persons employed on the chartered ships are fully protected by the Government, and during that time the remuneration is that which comes from Government employment. But if we take up a freight or tonnage charter we may only take up two, fifty, a hundred, or a thousand tons—only a small part of the tonnage of the ship.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: This vessel was fully loaded.

MR. MACARTNEY: Quite true; but she was not taken up on time conditions. The "adventure" was not "terminated" at a port in South Africa, but the vessel might go on to any other part of the world. The hon. Gentleman asks whether this is a question to which our attention has been directed. It is; and we have been most anxious to make conditions which would carry into effect the views of the hon. Gentleman, views with which every Member of the House sympathises. But the hon. Gentleman knows that probably there never was a time when it was more difficult to get freight ships, not only for Admiralty purposes, but for the contractors also. Contractors have found the greatest difficulty in getting freights to carry materials to carry on their work, and I am informed by those who are acting for the Admiralty in taking up freight ships for stores and coals that it would be absolutely impossible to obtain them as speedily as is necessary if strict regulations were put in the agreements. We have to buy coal in reply to telegraphic instructions from the Cape, St. Vincent, and elsewhere, and we have to get freight for it at the earliest moment, and in relation to stores we have received urgent recommendations from the War Office. In these circumstances, however desirable it might be to introduce restrictions of the character advocated by the hon. Gentleman, I am bound to tell the House that it would be absolutely impossible to carry on with any efficiency the great national work the Admiralty now has on hand, if it were insisted on. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be content with the assurance I have given him that the Admiralty does not look on this matter in a light or negligent spirit. If they saw the opportunity they would be only too glad to encourage by their own action the larger employment of British sailors by the mercantile marine.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said it was not for the purpose of unduly prolonging the debate that he rose, but for the purpose of asking for a little further information. The hon. Gentleman opposite had informed the House that if the Admiralty were chartering a ship for the conveyance of troops certain conditions would be imposed, including some as to the constitution of the crews. But in this case, though the whole ship was needed for Government stores, no conditions of this kind were imposed. And the crew of the "Caspian," as explained by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, was composed of men of the most diverse nationalities, so that they would be unable to speak to each other.

MR. MACARTNEY: The crews understand English.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to differ with the hon. Gentleman; they do not.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said that unless the men did understand English they would be unable to communicate with each other and with those in authority. There might also be among them some who were hostile to this country, who might take a favourable opportunity to do an ill turn, by which the stores and ship might be lost. He did not think sufficient information had been given to the House as to the precautions that were taken, having regard to the fact that in the particular case to which the motion referred the cargo consisted wholly of stores of Her Majesty's

Government. In a case of this kind where it was of vital importance that the troops should receive whatever was sent out in perfect safety, he thought the House would desire that some special precautions should be taken by the Transport Department. In saying this he wished to guard himself from the suspicion of casting any reflection on that department. He had already spoken this session of the remarkable regularity and despatch with which the Admiralty had performed transport work on an unprecedented scale; but, as this matter had been brought forward, he thought the House should be placed in possession of fuller information upon it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I may frankly admit that I was startled when I saw the composition of the crews of these two ships, and I regret their composition as much as anybody can. My right hon. friend asked what precautions were taken. In these particular cases the Admiralty relied upon the high character of the persons with whom they were contracting, the Union Steamship Company, and did not ask what was the composition of the crews. In the case of transports, the ships are under the control of the Admiralty, but it is impossible, in the case of the despatch of stores in response to telegraphed requisitions, to inquire into the composition of the crews of the vessels in which they are sent. We are bound to weigh the rapidity of our transactions against any possible risks. We have been conducting this business now for nearly six months, and hundreds of ships have been chartered without any accident having occurred. The owners are responsible, and I hope there are no shipowners in this country conducting business of this kind who are not careful to see that their ships are properly found. In this case all the officers were British, and we were given to understand that the majority of the crew were.

MR. HAVELCCK WILSON: I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that the officers were disgusted with the crew.

MR. GOSCHEN: The Admiralty cannot in a moment of emergency enter into the composition of the crew of a vessel. I can only express my regret at the state of things that has been pointed out, and I hope that all owners with whom the Admiralty have to deal in the future will avoid the necessity of a case like this being brought before the House. I cannot go beyond that, but I hope I have convinced the House that the Admiralty by no means minimises the importance of the matter.

COMMANDER BETHELL (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) expressed the hope that the Government would take into consideration generally the practice of employing foreign seamen on British ships.

Question put and negatived.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Power, Sir Reginald Hanson, and Sir Elliott Lees; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Macaleese, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, and Mr. Giles.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend The Shop Hours Act, 1892, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Steadman, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Woods.

SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Shop Hours Act, 1892," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 161.]

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

Bill to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Richards, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Woods.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

"To establish a Court of Criminal Appeal," presented, and read the first

time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 162.]

VACCINATION.

Bill to declare the Law that no prosecution shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Channing, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Steadman.

VACCINATION BILL.

"To declare the Law that no prosecution shall be commenced without the authority of the Guardians," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 163.]

SUPPLY.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [23rd March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

PHYSICAL AND MILITARY INSTRUCTION IN STATE-AIDED SCHOOLS.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.), who had on the Paper the following notice—

"To call attention to the importance of instituting physical and military drill for boys in all State-aided or rate-aided schools; and to move, That it is highly expedient for the physical and moral development of the youth of the country, and that it would conduce to national defence, that boys of school age should be regularly instructed in physical and military drill; that this House is of opinion that such instruction should be an obligatory part of the curriculum in all schools aided by public grants, except in cases of physical disability; and that suitable provisions should be inserted in the Code for carrying out this object"—

said that attention had been directed in an increasing degree to this matter in recent years. All through the country there were organisations for strengthening the physique of the young by drill more or less advanced according to their age, and in many cases with very happy results. There were exercises for boys which had a distinctly military character, and it might be that these organisations conduced towards a greater inclination for the military profession. He knew that many who had passed through church brigades and boys' brigades had proved very useful soldiers and sailors, but he did not propose to enter into that branch of the subject that night. His object was to obtain a more regular and general system of physical instruction in the primary schools. Great attention had been called to this matter by the Earl of Meath, a nobleman who was well known for his philanthropic work, and it was chiefly owing to him in 1895 that there was introduced into the Education Code of that year a direct reference to the giving of instruction in physical and military drill in schools, and it had continued in the Code up to the present time. In the course of last autumn a correspondence was published between the War Office and the Education Department in regard to the giving of improved instruction in military drill in schools. In answer to a letter from the Education Department, the Secretary of State for War indicated that he was ready to provide instructors and appliances for drill in schools if the Education Council was prepared to meet the expense of so doing. The Education Department gave a cold answer to the communication of the War Office, and indicated that already there was a considerable amount of physical instruction given in the schools, and that they could not give additional funds for that purpose. There was published at the same time in the newspapers a paragraph in regard to the revised instructions given to Her Majesty's Inspectors applicable to the Code. He called attention to this because it indicated a retrograde policy of the Department, which justified him in bringing it before the House. In paragraph 29 of the Revised Instructions issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors and applicable to the Code of 1899 he found these words—

"Instruction in Swedish or other drill, or in suitable physical exercises is a condition of the higher grant for discipline and organisation. Military drill for boys has been found very attractive in some districts, and deserves encouragement. A healthy game, which is one of the best forms of physical exercise, will satisfy the conditions of the Code. In country schools such games are almost always possible, and if played during an attendance should be supervised by some member of the staff who should teach the most skilful method of play,

and should encourage orderly behaviour and stop quarrelling."

Of course that was all very well, but it was a curious thing that in the new Education Code for 1900 a provision was omitted which was contained in Article 100 (b) of the Code last year, and in the previous Codes since 1895. The provision was as follows—

"The higher grant for discipline and organisation will not be paid to any school in which provision has not been made in the approved time-table for instruction in Swedish or other drill, or in suitable physical exercises, but children employed in labour and attending school half-time, and children for whom such instruction is unsuitable, may be exempted."

The only reference that could be at all connected with the subject of drill was expressed in these words—

"Grants are also made for the further instruction of certificated teachers and assistant teachers (Art. 79) in drawing, experimental science, modern languages, cookery, woodwork, school gymnastics, or military drill, or such other subjects approved by the Department as may form part of the curriculum of a public school in receipt of Parliamentary grants or of a higher grade school."

The provision expressly indicated, he believed, that military drill as a course of instruction had been omitted from the present Code. The Scotch Education Department had taken an altogether different direction by encouraging the introduction of military drill in schools. The Secretary of the Scotch Education Department recently issued a circular to school boards which contained the following—

"I am directed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh to bring under the attention of school boards and managers of schools a subject which is one of great public importance, and which, in his Lordship's opinion, concerns not less the interests of the pupils of State-aided schools than the welfare and security of the Empire. It is that of physical exercise, and particularly of those forms of military drill which most effectively develop the physical capacities of the pupils, and train them in the habit of the combined and dexterous employment of these capacities. Lord Balfour is convinced that such exercises, apart from any other consideration, would be a most important aid in attaining some substantial objects at which all education must aim. Not only do they tend to improve manual dexterity and to render more alert the faculties of observation, but they are also pre-eminently useful in developing those habits of comradeship, of responsibility, and of individual resource, which are of supreme importance, not only to the nation as a whole, but to the individual pupil. Indirectly they bring the individual into contact with the principles which lie at the foundation of national defence, and they bring home to him his duties and responsibilities as a citizen of the Empire, while at the same time giving him an opportunity of strengthening and developing his physical powers and rendering him more fit for his ordinary employment. Whatever form the military service of our country may hereafter assume, it is evident that the strength and security of the Empire as a whole, as well as that of every individual citizen, must depend upon the extent to which the moral elements of responsibility, duty, and readiness of judgment, along with the physical capacities, may be developed. Success in this can only be achieved by careful consideration of the best methods, and by employing these strenuously and zealously during school life. Attention to physical training becomes all the more urgent owing to the tendency of population to gather to the larger towns, where the opportunities for physical exercises are necessarily restricted. . . . The grant (the amount of which in proportion to the local effort must be based on general considerations) is paid on the general efficiency of the school, and that efficiency is tested by the adequacy of the training it supplies. Lord Balfour is of opinion that the thoroughness of the physical training must form a very important element in that test. He will direct the particular attention of the inspectors of schools to this subject; and it will probably be felt that fitness to judge of it ought to form an important qualification in those who aspire in future to fill such posts, and will not be found to be incompatible with the highest efficiency in other respects."

With regard to the question whether military drill had been given up in favour of physical exercises, he had been in communication with the superintendent of physical training under the London School Board, who had written as follows—

"Prior to my appointment under the London School Board in 1889, military drill and the old extension motions were taught in all boys' departments, but on taking up my duties I introduced a system of military exercises and as much military drill as was laid down in the Red-book from Section 1 to Section 26, exclusive of Section 8 (extension motions). This system is now taught in all schools under the School Board. The system of physical exercises is that sanctioned and adopted by the inspector of gymnasia at Aldershot, and taught in all Army schools."

This gentleman also distinctly denied that there had been any retrogression with regard to military drill. Nobody desired to have the boys treated as soldiers, or to see militarism introduced into the schools, but it was desirable that there should be such physical training as was best secured by simple military methods of drill. By this means the scholars would be physically developed

and their intelligence awakened. This system had been carried out in the district of East Hants and West Sussex, where the inspector, Mr. Burrows, was an enthusiast. If those who were opposed to this system could only see the smartness and general appearance of the scholars in the schools in that district they would be converted. Mr. Burrows had written as follows :—

"The Portsmouth district under my charge embraces East Hants and West Sussex, extends along the coast from Gosport and Portsmouth to Bognor, includes Jersey, and is bounded on the north by the Southdowns from the outskirts of Arundel to a line about ten miles west of Petersfield. Within these districts strong contrasts exist, such as that between schools in the midst of Portsmouth and those in the remote villages of the downs and of the forest country round Wolmer. In spite of these varied conditions I am able to say that in all boys' schools or departments throughout my district some approved form of military or physical drill, with or without arms, accompanied by music, is regularly practised, and that in all girls' and infants' schools or departments and in all mixed schools some kind of physical or Swedish drill with music is the rule. This has been the case for some years, long before public interest was aroused in the matter. In a considerable number of boys' schools the drill is purely military, including extension motions and company drill. In other schools physical drill, based more or less on military methods, is adopted. I have never proposed a uniform scheme, as it seems best that each school should take its own line within due limits, so long as the result arrived at is genuine physical and moral training. There is no subject so popular with children as drill which is taught during the ordinary school hours. The teachers are unanimous in stating that this training not only produces steadiness, obedience, smartness, and concentration, but certainly strengthens and brightens the intellectual power of the scholars. Throughout the whole of my district it is now clearly understood that drill forms one of the most important parts of elementary education. For much of the merely mental instruction is forgotten when the short school days end, but physical and moral training, inseparable if taught aright, will abide, and will form the sturdy stuff sorely needed by England and the Empire. A display of drill always forms a prominent feature of my annual inspection of all schools, whether large or small, whether in town or country. To this custom and to the unfailing readiness and enthusiasm with which the subject has been taken up by managers and teachers I attribute the remarkable progress made since their attention was drawn to it four years ago. Portsmouth set such a zealous and successful example, as was to be expected from the schools of the first naval port of the kingdom. Much of this progress is also due to the energetic formation of school bands to lead the exercises and marching. All large schools and many smaller ones now possess bands of six to thirty performers, using drums and fifes in the boys' and violins in the girls' schools. These bands are composed of teachers of all grades and of elder scholars. The use of these instruments does away with the necessity of costly pianos, and enables the band to be maintained at a trifling expense, and to be moved into the playground to lead open-air drill in fine weather."

A very important point was that in this district, in which the system was such a great success, the teachers themselves were enthusiastic in the matter. Many of the teachers had learned their drill in the local Volunteer corps attached to the training colleges. Instead, therefore, of employing military instructors these teachers taught the children the drill. It was always an advantage that both the physical and the educational teaching should be in the same hands; at any rate it had been extremely successful in the East Hants and West Sussex district. Moreover, the drill formed a part of the regular curriculum. In some cases there was a certain time devoted to the subject every day, while in others the instruction was given on alternate days. It was a noticeable fact that the attendance on the days on which the drill instruction was given was larger than on the others, and nothing was a greater punishment for the children than that they should be deprived of their drill. On this subject of school drill, Mr. Clancy, head master of the Roman Catholic school at Portsmouth, and President of the National Union of Teachers, had reported as follows—

"During the past four years I have included military drill in my school time-table. I state unhesitatingly that the results have been highly satisfactory in every respect. One of the greatest obstacles to true educational progress has been the early age at which pupils leave school. I have found that school drill is a great inducement to the boys to remain longer under my charge and so to extend their school career. Our ordinary lessons are apt to tire the lads and cause them to long for the day when school life should cease. No sooner did we start our school drill than it was evident we had infused a new educational spirit into the pupils, so that their regularity and punctuality showed a marked improvement. As an aid to discipline I can speak with no uncertain voice of its marvellous results. The lads are taught obedience, and that, in my opinion, is absolutely essential if the teacher is to succeed at all. Boys love order and will respect those who insist upon it. Therefore every lesson benefits by the teaching of drill. What is more offensive than an ill-mannered, uncouth youth? Drill teaches us to be orderly, polite and prompt, hence its great value as an essential part of the Code. The general bearing of the pupils is greatly benefited by a course of physical exercises, and their ordinary appear-

Sir J. Fergusson.

ance is vastly improved at a most important period of their careers. The spirit of true patriotism is developed and a love of all that tends to make a great nation is inculcated at the proper moment. The good results of a regular course of military drill are so patent that one hesitates to specify them. I know of nothing more likely to reach the ideal of a 'sound mind in a sound body' than the carrying out of a judiciously arranged programme of physical exercises. If carried out in moderation during school hours by a willing and enthusiastic body of teachers the future citizens of this empire will largely benefit thereby. I wish the movement every success, and trust that we may be able to carry out the experiment in every school in the country."

Similar testimonies as to the success of the system and the benefit derived therefrom came from Manchester, the West of England, and many other parts of the country. He had said it was desirable that some consideration should be given to encourage the teachers to adopt this subject, and his attention had been called to Article 83 (d) in the Code for 1900, which said—

"Grants are also made for the further instruction of certificated teachers and assistant teachers (Article 79) in drawing, experimental science, modern languages, cookery, woodwork, school gymnastics, or military drill, or such other subject approved by the Department as may form part of the curriculum of the public school in receipt of Parliamentary grants or of a higher grade school."

Also to Article 91 (d), which was in the following terms—

"Where courses are established by the county council or other local authorities, either within their own area or at an approved technical college or other central institution, for the further instruction of teachers as in Article 83 (d), according to a scheme approved by the Department, and under instructors whose competency for this special work is proved to the satisfaction of the Department, there shall be paid a grant amounting to not more than three-fourths of the actual expenditure upon the class, after deduction of the income from the fees, provided that such expenditure is duly set forth in properly audited accounts and is approved by the Department."

It might be asked what was to be done with a small country school taught by an old woman, but a system was not to be condemned because it could only be carried out in a limited way. On Friday last week detachments from various schools gave a display before a large audience at Portsmouth, and it was delightful to see the smartness and intelligence shown by the children. The ordinary teachers conducted, and nothing could be prettier than the fixed attention and smartness with which little girls followed the orders of their teachers. It was better that the drilling should be carried out by the ordinary teachers because the habits of steadiness, concentration, and ready obedience were effective through all branches of study. The results were highly satisfactory wherever the system had been adopted. When the national defence of the country was being considered it was important there should be a scheme by which the courage, the bravery, and aptitude for home defence which existed among so many branches of the population should be utilised more. Advanced drill would be much more easily learnt if elementary drill was mastered in early life. In Switzerland military drill was compulsory in every school, yet it was as free a country as existed, and was conspicuous for the industry and frugality of its people. Orderly habits and ideas of discipline and obedience, which were gained by military drill, were an unmixed benefit. The whole manhood of the country would be improved by such a scheme, and he thought it would be a valuable addition to the education of the country. In this regard Scotland was far in advance of England, and he thought, looking at the importance of the question, the right hon. Gentleman need not disdain to take a lead from the Scotch Education Department. Under the circumstances, he did not regret that he could not move the Amendment he had intended, and he could only say that he did not desire to divide the House upon the question.

*MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said the matter which had been brought to the attention of the House by the right hon. Baronet was one of great importance. Upon the general question of the advantage of some kind of drill to the boys and girls at any public elementary school there could not be two opinions. But at all the public elementary schools the children, from the youngest age up to the age of ten or twelve, two or three times a week, went through a course of drill in their own schoolrooms, as part of the curriculum. In the case of boys it was more military in its nature, they, in many cases, being instructed by men who had been in the Army; but where it did not take place so systematically the drill was given under the instruction of the teachers themselves,

who, in many cases, held certificates from drill instructors at the training colleges of their capacity to undertake such instruction. At the present time there were in all or most of the elementary schools playground drill, class-room drill, fire drill, and discipline drill, and the only question was how far the drilling of the children should proceed. It ought to proceed just as far as the health of the children and the economy of noise in the class rooms warranted. There was some danger in going beyond that. Volunteer brigades existed in connection with some of the teachers' training colleges, and there were boys' brigades in connection with many of the schools. Some of those brigades had ceased to exist because the military spirit had been thought to have been carried too far. Then, again, enthusiasts who had been to Scandinavia pressed on the Department the idea that Swedish drill was far superior to military drill, and after sufficient pressure the Department yielded, and Swedish drill became an alternative to military drill. Then another body of enthusiasts pointed out that drill was not the best form of physical exercise, and that gymnastics ought to be carried out systematically on every playground by means of a trapeze and parallel bars, and as a result the Code admitted that as suitable physical exercise. The present Code stated that as a condition of a school being efficient it must provide physical exercise for the children. A good deal of physical exercise was provided and would go on irrespective of the result of that debate, but he hoped there would be no attempt to press upon the schools and the children too much the idea of spending time in military drill. He was not quite sure that the older forms of military drill would be useful—he spoke under correction—in actual warfare. The great thing in future would be not company drill and squad drill, close order, forming fours, and marching by rank and file, but skirmishing and sharpshooting, and he did not see how in public elementary playgrounds skirmishing or sharpshooting could be practised. He thought the great want still was a higher degree of intelligent education for the children. It was not only necessary for a soldier nowadays to hear and obey the word of command; he must have an intelligent understanding of the word of command and its adaptation to circumstances; and there was some risk if the precious time—the far too short time—children spent at school were spent in mechanical drill that it would draw their minds from any chance of gaining more and more intelligence. He did not intend to meet the proposal of the right hon. Baronet in any antagonistic manner. We quite agree that in garrison towns the school teachers ought to be free, as they were free now, to carry military drill in schools to a high degree of perfection, but not in rural schools where perhaps thirty boys were taught by a mistress. In seaport towns the instruction ought to be of a maritime and not of a military character, and there ought to be elasticity allowed to the local managers and teachers. Any proposal to make military drill compulsory could not be in harmony with existing conditions in thousands of schools. He gathered that the chief object of the right hon. Baronet was to call the attention of the House and the Department to the subject, and not to press for any general compulsory provision. He believed that the Department was thoroughly in sympathy with the idea. He would suggest that the right hon. Baronet could not serve his case better than by leaving it where it was after having ventilated it. The proper course, if the right hon. Baronet wished to do more, would be to approach individual bodies of managers and school boards on the subject. They would be much more likely to act enthusiastically if approached individually than if there was an article in the Code compelling military drill. He was quite sure if military drill were made compulsory for securing the higher grant, there would be an outcry against it on behalf of the schools, and that the best interests of the cause which the right hon. Baronet had at heart would be served by his not pressing the case further. So far as it had gone he felt himself very much in sympathy with the proposal.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I think the House is very much indebted to my right hon. friend for having brought this important question under its consideration at this particular time. I was entirely in sympathy with nearly everything the right hon. Baronet said in his speech, and I only

differed from him where he rather suggested that the Education Department was less zealous in this particular matter than it ought to be. There are two questions to be considered by the House, and they seem to have been rather confused. One is the question of physical training, and the other is how far that physical training should have a military character. With reference to the question of physical training, the Education Department has practically made it compulsory in all schools, because it is a condition without which the higher grant cannot be obtained, and suitable physical exercise is to be taught in every school. Although the right hon. Baronet criticises the language of the Code, there is, as I shall show presently, nothing whatever in the new Code to alter the practice which has prevailed for many years past. Of course the very best kind of physical exercise and the best way to develop the physical powers of children is by games, and in country districts and in schools where the playgrounds permit of games, no drill in the world can develop the muscles and limbs of children like a good healthy game. But where the conditions are not favourable for games the Education Code provides that in the school itself, under a roof and within doors, the children shall be given Swedish drill, gymnastics, military drill, or something by which their physical powers may be developed.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: May I ask my right hon. friend why the only Article in which physical and military drill was mentioned has been dropped out of the Code?

SIR J. GORST: The Code of the present year, more than the Codes of previous years, has left everything to the local managers of schools. The principle of the Department is to allow the local managers, or the teachers of the schools, to decide what is the best course of instruction for the pupils to be taught, and it is not only military and physical drill that has disappeared, but everything else has disappeared from the Code which is calculated to dictate to the local managers the particular course of instruction which they are to observe. But the curriculum practised in the schools must be one which the inspectors approve of, and the language of the instructions to inspectors which the right hon. Baronet read, and to which I will also venture to call attention, is very precise on this subject. These instructions state that instruction in Swedish drill or any suitable physical exercise is a condition for obtaining the higher grant; that military drill for boys has been found very attractive in some districts and deserves encouragement, and that a healthy game, which was one of the best forms of physical exercise, would satisfy the conditions of the Code. The instructions also state that in town schools such games are impossible or only possible in a few schools, but that it is incumbent on teachers to provide for the physical development of growing boys and girls by some form of drill or gymnastics. It is also laid down that half time children should not be made to drill, and that children who have walked long distances should also be excused. These instructions practically compel every school to have such drill or other physical exercise as is suitable to the conditions of the school and practicable under the circumstances. Now, I come to a further question. Should we or can we give that drill a military character? In that matter the Education Department has left, and intend to leave, the local managers to their own discretion. In the first place, military drill is absolutely impossible in a great number of schools. How is it possible in a village school where there are thirty or forty children under one woman teacher, with a girl monitress, to have military drill, unless the lady were an Amazon? I took up at random the other day in the Education Department a list of ninety-one schools, in fifteen of which military drill was taught. Of the seventy-six in which military drill was not taught there were only twenty-four which had more than one hundred boys or girls in the school, and a very small proportion of these boys were over ten years of age. How could it be possible in those schools, where there are less than one hundred children, and where very few of the boys are above ten years of age, to have any kind of military drill? In Portsmouth, in London, and in the great towns military drill is very common, where the local managers think it suitable, but it is quite clear that it would be impossible for the Education Department to make the system compulsory. It would probably defeat its own end, because when

they try to compel teachers to take a course which they had been accustomed to adopt on their own discretion, they rather resent it, and are less inclined to have military drill. All I can say in answer to my right hon. friend is that this is a subject which has occupied, and will always occupy, the careful attention of the Education Department; but as a matter of fact there is suitable physical drill, better or worse, in every school in England and Wales. A very large proportion of those schools have of their own accord made that physical exercise military, and, having the power to exercise their own discretion, have produced the results which my right hon. friend has referred to as obtaining at Portsmouth, and with which he is so pleased. I do not think there is anything more that can be done to show the strong feeling which the Educational Department has in favour of physical exercise as an absolutely essential part of the training of the child, quite as beneficial to them as reading, writing, and arithmetic, and quite as necessary for them. But I think the system as established is satisfactory. I believe that every school and every set of school managers are quite alive to the importance of this matter, but, as far as the military character of the drill is concerned, that must be left, and can only be left, to the discretion of the local managers.

*MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): The Vice-President and the Government are to be congratulated on the practical and reasonable reply which has been given to the right hon. Gentleman who opened this debate. I am indeed pleased, as one who is known to take an active part in athletic exercises, and to encourage gymnasiums in my own district, that the Vice-President has decided to leave the question of military drill, or physical exercises to the local authorities who educate our children. It is wise that the duty of educating our children in physical exercises should be left to the discretion of the school boards, and to the free choice of the school managers and their masters and mistresses, who can best adapt the form of physical exercise to the physique of the children and to local circumstances. I was also glad to hear the Vice-President saying that it would be defeating the end the right hon. Gentleman has in view in making what is now optional compulsory. I agree with him. If the right hon. Gentleman wants to see the difference between voluntary physical exercise and compulsory drill, let him go to a French school, where military drill is compulsory, and contrast the effect on, say 100 boys, with a similar number of boys of the same age in one of our schools where physical exercises and old English games are taught. The French boys do not know how to box, or play football, or cricket, and they do not compare even in physical smartness with our boys who are taught gymnastic exercises.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: May I say that the physical drill is military drill.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: No, no. I have known good soldiers made better warriors by the physical exercises adapted from civilian life and now practised at Aldershot. The right hon. Gentleman wants to institute these mechanical, automatic movements, which the South African War shows are of little use, instead of the physical exercises which we are giving in the elementary schools throughout the country. If the right hon. Gentleman had confined himself to the first portion of his speech, I should not have complained; but, like a lady's letter, the sting of the speech was in the postscript. He said that this question of physical drill or military exercises is a serious matter when national defence is before the country. I want the House to follow this argument to its logical conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman declares that the military drill which he advocates in the schools would be an easy transition to cadet corps; from these to the Volunteers; and then into the Army. His real objective is not gymnastics, but militarism. His desire is recruiting, and not the expansion of the chest measurement or the improvement of the physique of the children for its own sake. What I want to point out is that we should not discuss this question when we have a war going on and a demand for the remission of the death duties in the case of officers, when we have an atmosphere in this House of military feeling, and when feather-headed patriots are clamouring to go to war with everybody, provided they do not do the fighting. I prefer that we should discuss it in times of peace and on rational lines. I have another objection to the right hon. Gentleman's speech. He says he wants

our elementary schools as a source from which Tommy Atkins is to be recruited; but why not all schools—intermediate, secondary, and higher schools?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Hear, hear!

*MR. JOHN BURNS: The right hon. and gallant Baronet says "Hear, hear!" Does he know to what extent gymnastic exercises and physical drill prevail in London, our largest recruiting centre? I should be delighted to take him round my own district, where he would see the children instructed in formation in line, marching, forming fours, and in all the elements of physical drill so far as they are not automatic and purely military. But if you extend that part of the instruction you will cause many fathers and mothers to withdraw their children from that form of military exercise. I maintain that everything we want in the way of physical exercise and gymnastics, short of military drill, we have in the elementary board schools at the present time. There is not the same reason for this demand that there was ten or fifteen years ago. Take my own parish. We have twenty-five board schools, and ten years ago every one of these board school playgrounds was locked up before the schools were open, and after school teaching was finished. Now I am glad to say the playgrounds are open from early morning to dark, and the children may go there in all kinds of weather to practise all kinds of games. That in itself is good, but many of the board schools have elementary gymnastic appliances, in the practice of which the children may indulge when they are not in school. Let us remember what Lord Meath has done in the direction of providing open spaces in London. There is hardly a district in London where there are not good recreation grounds, giant strides, and all the appliances of a good gymnasium, while ten years ago these many advantages were denied to the children. Then we have the enormous popularity of cricket, which is better than any barrack-yard drill, tennis, football, and all the other sports that have really worked a revolution in the physique of our town lads, and especially the girls of the middle classes. Nothing is more pleasing to see than the way in which this growth of athleticism, without military drill, has improved the physique of the girls of the middle classes; and I am positively convinced that a great deal of good will result if allowed to develop on rational but non-military lines. I want to put this point to the right hon. Baronet as a soldier. He made the curious admission that nothing was more repugnant to the soldier than extra drill punishment. And why? Because you are making him an automaton; yet he wants to carry that system into school life. What we want is that a man should have less of barrack-yard drill; that their heads should be educated rather than their feet; that they should have individual resource and adaptability. Our soldiers, in fact, should have the Boer adaptability with the quality of fighting at close quarters which they now possess rather more from games than by drill. What the speech of the right hon. Baronet really amounts to is that the option of school boards to give either military or physical drill to the scholars should be abolished, and the instruction confined to military drill. He says that a military training begets obedience. I do not think so. It does not always beget obedience or discipline in the sense I understand discipline. I can remember when I went through the streets of London at the head of forty thousand or fifty thousand unemployed, and the men most disobedient, most riotous, and most ready to enter into conflict with the police, were the Army Reservists whom your methods of military drill had not made obedient, loyal, or patient. That is an interesting fact and worth pounds of theory. Ask the Commissioner of Police what is the effect of barrack-yard training on the recruits who go through the Army into the police. If a dispute occurs, say, between a cabman and a 'busman, the civilian policeman, who has not been automatised by barrack-yard drill, takes out his book quietly, becomes a peripatetic magistrate in a blue uniform, and, adapting himself to the situation, carefully puts down all the particulars. But the ex-Army man looks helplessly around for some one to instruct him what to do, while the cabby accuses the 'busman and the 'busman the cabby, and probably both meanwhile escape. Barrack-yard drill does not beget real obedience or real discipline, is opposed to initiative, resource, and promptitude, and has not the bracing influence of physical exercise. I come to my last point. The effect of all this

military drill means that you want to make the working class a recruiting ground for soldiers more than it is. I believe this is one of the best countries in the world. I know of no country for which men ought to sacrifice more of their health and their wealth than for this, our country. But if you want to stimulate patriotism you are not going to make generals by giving men gaudy uniforms, or make patriots by teaching children barrack-yard drill. If the Army wants recruits you have got two great recruiting sergeants—one is poverty, which procures you 95 per cent., and the other is patriotism, which gets you 5 per cent. What is now being proposed, it seems to me, is to increase by fictitious and adventitious aids, by military drill in the playground, that 95 per cent. The working classes do not want these, and, what is more, they won't have it. If you force upon them the drill sergeant, as against the schoolmaster, in the board schools, the working people will withdraw their children, and send them to schools where only physical exercises are taught. It has been declared that the Duke of Wellington said—I do not think he said it, but I accept it as if he said it—that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. That is a testimony that a good athlete makes a good soldier; and I believe that is the case. We have seen in this war good cricketers distinguish themselves at the front, and we all deplore the loss of that excellent golfer, Lieutenant Tait, who met his death in discharging a soldier's duty. We all regret it, and none more than I, who had the happiness of his personal acquaintance. But if we are going to fill our Army with athletic men, do not let us discourage them in early life with pipe-clay military drill. I have a chest measurement of 43 inches, and 33 inches round the waist, without all this nonsense of military drill; and it is because the average Labour Member has not had this automatic military drill, that he can give nearly all the soldiers in this House five inches of chest measurement, and then beat him by one or two. It is because we have had our industrial training and boxing in our gymnasiums that we have the physique we now have. I am extremely anxious that the working classes shall retain these advantages without military drill, and it is because the Vice-President says we want discrimination, and adaptability to circumstances, and therefore rejects the proposal of the right hon. Baronet, that I have stood up to take the side of the Government as against their two military supporters.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said he rose to dispute the accuracy of what the hon. Member who last spoke had stated against the military profession. His experience was that parents liked their children to be properly and well drilled, and that they would far rather see them drilled by a drill sergeant than by the teachers. From his personal observation he found the great advantage which followed this military drill at school. Not only were the children far better set up, but it taught them habits of obedience, the use of their limbs, the habitude to obey words of command, to be more quick in perception, and better adapted to go into life after they left school. It did not follow that the school was, because of this drill, to be a recruiting ground for the Army and Reserve forces. He was glad to think that in this respect Scotland was so much in advance of England. He would not urge that the word "military" should be inserted in the Code, but that a better grant should be given to those schools which had good drill and military training established in them. It stood to reason that if children were taught those exercises it would fit them to be better soldiers if called upon in a sudden emergency to serve in the Army, Militia, or Volunteers. They would not go as mere novices into the defensive force, but would be in great measure qualified to prove themselves good and loyal soldiers. No one could over-estimate the good cadet corps were doing in Scotland and England. It took away young lads, up to eighteen years of age, from the public-houses, and fostered good comradeship and good feeling. He was satisfied that if good drill were encouraged the boys would take a far greater interest and pride in their school, and that schools would vie with one another, not only in good teaching, but in military drill.

BRITISH COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL INTERESTS IN CHINA.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): Mr. Speaker, I desire

to call the attention of the House to the failure of Her Majesty's Government to uphold British commercial and political interests in China. Though I have recently made extensive journeys in that country, I do not claim to pose as an authority on Chinese affairs, but I rather propose to make a statement as to the present situation, based on information obtained from the best-informed men upon the spot. I make no apology for recalling the attention of the House to the necessity for the initiation by Her Majesty's Government of a more definite and vigorous policy in the Far East, if our commercial and political interests are to be maintained. I am aware how entirely absorbed the public mind is by what has been transpiring in South Africa for some time past, but I venture to submit that we would be unworthy of the great Imperial responsibilities which rest upon our shoulders were we to allow the affairs, however important, of any one part of our Empire to monopolise our attention to the serious neglect of vital interests in other parts of the world. Nor is it unsuitable, Mr. Speaker, to review the situation in China, because of the agreeable way in which public attention has again been directed to the affairs of that Empire by the signal success of American diplomacy, which has resulted in the assent of England, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, and Italy to the principle of equality of customs tariff and of harbour dues and equality of railway rates being maintained in China. The advantages conferred by this undertaking are to be common to all States and all peoples, and our kinsmen across the Atlantic are to be warmly congratulated on the success which has attended their efforts. The commercial community in this country are deeply indebted to the United States Government for having thus ensured equality of opportunity for British trade as well as their own. How far Her Majesty's Government ought to be congratulated on the part they have played in this matter has not yet been fully disclosed, but I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs will be able to tell us to-night that not only was Her Majesty's Government the first to give assent to the proposals, but they, so far as it was judicious, gave their active co-operation in the endeavour to secure the carrying through of the arrangement. I am aware that, in view of the jealousy recently exhibited towards us by foreign Powers, the United States Government were probably able to succeed where we would have failed; and, indeed, any interference on our part might have defeated our object. It is with great satisfaction I notice that not only is there to be equality in the matter of customs tariff and harbour dues, but equality also of railway rates. The assurance in regard to the latter is of the utmost value, and it was one which the British Government failed to secure in the Anglo-Russian Agreement. I will now turn to what I found to be the position of affairs in North China. The seizure of Port Arthur by Russia is somewhat ancient history, and I will not refer further to that subject than to say that the people in the East most likely to know unanimously state that no one was so much surprised as were the Russians themselves at their being allowed to take Port Arthur. Russia has already made Port Arthur impregnable by new forts practically encircling it, and in August last she had no fewer than 40,000 troops at Port Arthur and Talienwan. There were also Russian soldiers at the railway stations on her Manchurian lines. She is in military occupation of that huge country of Manchuria, rich agriculturally, in minerals, and fisheries, with emphatically a white man's climate. Even at Niuchwang, the only treaty port through which we can now trade, Russian cossacks had been policing the town on the invitation, forsooth, of the British Consul. On the north bank of the river at Niuchwang there is a Russian concession of several square miles, on which one terminus of her railway is being built, and over which she enjoys sovereign rights. Not content with this acquisition, Russia is negotiating for a further concession on the south side of the river, opposite Niuchwang and adjacent to the terminus of the Niuchwang Extension Line from Shanghaikwan, obviously with the intention of bridging the river and linking up her Manchurian railways, including that from Port Arthur, where her troops are concentrated, with the line leading viâ Tien-tsin to Pekin, which no doubt she will ultimately acquire by advancing to the Chinese Government the money to pay off the British bondholders, unless much greater determination be shown by the

[illegible] Russia [illegible] information [illegible] to Members [illegible] place this map in [illegible] short time. The [illegible] the Blue books [illegible] the whole of these [illegible] in North China and [illegible]

[illegible] Government [illegible] similar preferen- [illegible] Thibet, the [illegible] between India and the Russian sphere. While a comparatively poor country like Russia is not hesitating to spend over £[illegible] sterling on these projects, which will enable her finally to reap a rich harvest as regards both her commercial and political interests, what, I ask, is England doing? The British Government, so far, appear to have lost those qualities of enterprise,

[illegible]

courage, and foresight which characterised our forefathers, and by virtue of which our world-wide British Empire has been built up. Not only have they refused, as a matter of high imperial policy, to give any encouragement or guarantee to a railway from British Burma to the Upper Yang-tsze as a counterpoise to the Russian railways, but they have actually stopped the construction of the railway to Kunlon Ferry, in British Burma; and this at a time when France is vigorously pushing on with the construction of her railway from Tonkin through Hunan to Szechuan, by which she will draw the trade of south-west China through French territories with the aid of protective tariffs, instead of our being able to carry on a free and unrestricted trade through British Burma. British capitalists at Tien-tsin were perfectly prepared to construct a railway from Tien-tsin to Kalgan, which is the trade route into Mongolia, but were informed by the Foreign Office that they could not support such an application, as Kalgan was in the sphere conceded to Russia under the Anglo-Russian Agreement, though it is far away from Manchuria. This line of railway, being an extension of the Pekin-Tien-tsin line to Kalgan, would have been the most powerful barrier against Russian advance southwards. An important factor in considering the course of events in north China, and an important and powerful influence in the direction of keeping it open to trade is the fact that the interests of Japan are identical with our own, and that Japan is prepared to resolutely uphold her rights when assailed by Russia. Japan having a population increasing at the rate of half a million a year, and her cultivable area being comparatively small, it is absolutely essential that she should have room for expansion. The natural expansion of Japan, whether as regards climate, fertility of soil, fisheries or mineral wealth, is into Corea. From my interviews with Japanese statesmen, I gathered that, even at the risk of war, they would prevent any Russian interference with what they consider their priority of right in Corea. Moreover, the active co-operation of Japan could be counted on in any effort to uphold throughout China the treaty rights of all nations. With regard to Kiau-chau, the Germans know their own minds, and I saw not fewer than ten thousand Chinamen at work constructing the harbour works and building the railway into the interior of Shantung, whilst palatial buildings were springing up on all sides. The contrast between the activity of the Russians at Port Arthur and of the Germans at Kiau-chau and our do-nothing policy at Wei-hai-wei, after our having somewhat ostentatiously announced to the world that we had taken that place as a counterpoise to Port Arthur, is most humiliating. At Wei-hai-wei not a single fort has been constructed, not one gun mounted; practically no buildings have been erected, and even the pier, with 30 feet of water at the end, which had been damaged by the blowing-up of a Chinese man-of-war, has not yet been repaired, though the uprights were ready to receive the superstructure. Beyond a little dredging, the construction of water-condensing apparatus and the drilling of a few Chinese soldiers, nothing seems to have been done. When I went to the top of the island at Wei-hai-wei, I wished the First Lord of the Treasury had been there with me, for when I condemned the right hon. Gentleman's action in having, unasked by Germany, precluded us from connecting Wei-hai-wei with the interior of Shangtung by railway, he interposed the remark that it was physically impossible. I could look across the country towards Chefoo without being able to see a hill a hundred feet high. And when again, from the top of the pinnacle at Chefoo, I looked across towards Wei-hai-wei, the experience was the same. The fact is that few railways in the world would be so easy of construction as one from Wei-hai-wei to Chefoo, and in at least two other directions leading from the territory appertaining to Wei-hai-wei through rich valleys into the interior of Shangtung, the same is true. Wei-hai-wei might have been made a great success as a commercial port, had we not thus tied our hands. The roadstead at Chefoo is most exposed, and for days together in the winter ships can neither land nor discharge. With proper facilities a large portion of the trade done through Chefoo would have been transferred to Wei-hai-wei. As, however, the situation is to-day, Russia having succeeded in converting the question in North China from a sea to a land question, it is very doubtful whether money ought to be spent on Wei-hai-wei. In all probability the best course would be to hand Wei-hai-wei over to Germany, if

she, in return, would support our taking another naval base at or near the mouth of the Yang-tsze River. The Government announced in this House that concessions had been got for British subjects for 2,800 miles of railways in China. But terms and conditions enabling the carrying out of the projects have not yet been arranged in connection with a single concession. The Shanghai to Nankin, and several other concessions, were given as reparation for the breach of faith on the part of the Chinese Government in giving the Pekin-Hankow concession to foreign Powers over our heads. Therefore, in regard to these our Government should stand no nonsense as to the terms and conditions upon which they should be built. Under the Treaty of Tien-tsin we are entitled to equally favourable terms and conditions to those granted by the Chinese Government to Russia, France, and Germany; but we find that the Chinese Government are insisting upon a mixed Chinese and European control, which has proved, in the case of the Niuchwang Extension Railway, to be surrounded by difficulties. Our Government should insist on the British concessionnaires having complete control of the security, that is, to pay interest and repay principal, with a guarantee of non-interference and the maintenance of our rights, giving only the Chinese Government an option of taking over the railways on certain terms and conditions. The Russians, Germans, and French will enjoy this control; why not the British? The confidence of the British investor was disturbed by the way in which the Government allowed Russia to dictate the terms and conditions upon which the Niuchwang Extension Loan should be concluded, and by the unsatisfactory way in which the mixed control has since operated; for though they offered £12,000,000 sterling against £2,300,000 required when that loan was floated, it is questionable whether the money would now be forthcoming for even the cream of the railway concessions, unless obtained on the terms and conditions I have mentioned. With regard to the terms and conditions upon which the concessions for these—what we may term—reparation railways, I find that on the 4th of September, 1898, Sir Claude MacDonald stated in a dispatch that the terms accorded for the construction of these lines will not be inferior to the terms granted for the construction of any railways in China proper, and that they had agreed to send him a confidential note to that effect. This would have secured terms and conditions equal to those granted to Germany for the railways she is constructing in Shantung; but, within a few days, under instructions from the First Lord of the Treasury, Sir Claude MacDonald accepted these concessions on not less favourable conditions than these granted to the concessionnaires for the Pekin and Hankow Railway. Those terms and conditions are workable when in the hands of concessionnaires having at their back the Governments of Russia and France, but are useless to British concessionnaires so long as they do not receive the proper support from the British Government. An American syndicate entered into a preliminary contract with the Chinese Government for the building of a railway from Hankow to Canton, and also made a provisional agreement with an English syndicate, with the object of having this railway constructed jointly by an Anglo-American company. The Chinese Government, however, have thrown every obstacle in the way of the ratification of this concession on terms and conditions not less favourable to those granted to other Powers, whilst the French Government have actively intervened to prevent the carrying through of the concession, and claimed that unless the American syndicate is prepared to construct the line on the terms and conditions of the Pekin and Hankow Concession, the right to construct the railway falls into their hands. The question of by whom this important railway is to be constructed is one vitally affecting the future of the Chinese Empire; for, if the concessionnaires of the Pekin and Hankow Railway are allowed to secure this concession, it will give to Russia and France a railway system through the heart of the Chinese Empire from the extreme north to the extreme south, and will place them practically in military occupation of it. I hope, therefore, to hear from the Under Secretary that Her Majesty's Government are vigorously supporting the United States Government in insisting that this railway, penetrating as it does from the south right into the heart of our supposed sphere of interest, the Yang-tsze basin, shall not be given to foreign Powers.

Mr. Joseph Walton.

To show how absolutely Her Majesty's Government appears to fail to sustain British rights in China, I may instance the Pekin Syndicate. This corporation was promised a concession for a railway to connect its mineral properties in Shansi with the navigable limits of the Yang-tsze river. But, whilst the application for such communication has been flatly refused to the British company, there has been secured by the concessionnaires of the Pekin-Hankow Railway the right to construct a railway from Kai-feng-fu to Honan-fu, with the option of extending it to Singan-fu; thus barring the road for the construction of the railway promised to the Pekin syndicate. Another great achievement of Her Majesty's Government was the Yang-tsze Valley Agreement, which, even now, many people in this country imagine secures to us the Yang-tsze basin as a special sphere of influence, in which we have priority of rights. This, however, is an absolute myth. Russia, France, Germany, and Japan are all to-day more actively engaged in advancing their commercial and political interests in the rich Yang-tsze basin than we are ours. They have sovereign rights over various areas at Shanghai, Hankow and elsewhere, whilst we have none. A further surrender on the part of Her Majesty's Government is in regard to the extension of the French settlement at Shanghai. A firm stand was originally taken against this demand by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and backed up as it was at the time by the United States of America, it was understood that the demand would not be granted. How little needed such a concession was will be made very clear when I state that in the French concession already in existence there are only seventeen Frenchmen resident; and yet, notwithstanding this, our diplomatists have again given way. France has got the extension of her concession, and British prestige has once more been lowered in the eyes of the Chinese Government. In one debate in this House we heard with great satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government had at length determined to do something to uphold British commercial interests by the placing of gunboats on the inland waterways of China for the protection of British trade. Two gunboats were sent out to patrol the Upper Yang-tsze more than twelve months ago; but, though their crews have been paid by the British taxpayer and they have been on the spot all this time, they have yet to make the first ascent of that portion of the river which they were intended to patrol; and the Under Secretary informed us the other day that they were going to attempt this next month. The fact is that these two boats, the "Woodcock" and the "Woodlark," are unsuitable for the purpose, both as regards construction and steaming power. As they have to go up rapids sometimes running thirteen and fourteen knots an hour and steam only twelve knots, it is obvious they can only mount the rapids with assistance from shore, and they would be useless, therefore, if a hostile attitude were assumed by the inhabitants of the district. The whirlpools and cross-currents of the river are in places so strong that the gunboats ought to have paddle-wheels instead of screws, and it is ridiculous to send out boats constructed of plates under one-eighth of an inch thick instead of being at least three-sixteenths for a river of the character of the Upper Yang-tsze. Apparently without any inquiry whatever, when gunboats were needed for the Upper Yang-tsze, the Admiralty decided to send out two Nile gunboats. This is a serious matter, so far as the commercial interests of this country are concerned, because a British cargo-steamer is expected to be plying on the Upper Yang-tsze within the next month or two; and in all probability the half million Chinamen now carrying on the trade on the river will regard this innovation as a menace to their livelihood, trouble will arise. It is imperative that gunboats, capable of going wherever they may be required, without shore assistance and without regard to the state of the river, should be placed on the Upper Yang-tsze immediately. The "Woodcock" and "Woodlark" now there should be transferred to the West River, as on that river the old "Tweed" can steam only two knots against the current and the "Sandpiper" four knots, which, all will agree, renders them quite unable to cope effectually with the pirates who infest that district. The pirates on the West River have more than once seized British-owned steamers, ransacked them, and then used them for capturing richly-laden native junks. But up to the present time no punishment

whatever has been inflicted on the perpetrators of these outrages. It is true we are told that the Admiral is now considering the question of how best to repress the piracy. But why now? Why not twelve months ago? Why were the gunboats in the district prevented for so long a time from taking any effective measures for the repression of the piracy which has been so rife? Then with regard to the opening up of all the inland waterways of China, the agreement with the Chinese Government was announced in this House as one which would make it possible to take British merchandise in British ships, not merely to the ports recognised by treaty, but to every riverside town and station in the whole interior of China. On the strength of this agreement leading British shipping firms in China expended £60,000 in building steamers to trade from Hong Kong and Canton up the West River. So far, however, from these steamers being allowed to take British goods to every riverside town and station, they have not been permitted to load or discharge cargo at intervening places between the treaty ports. They have consequently been working at a considerable loss, and several have been taken off altogether. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in answer to a question I put to him the other day* on this subject, said this was not within the knowledge of the Foreign Office. In view, however, of the lengthy correspondence between the shipping firms in China and the British Legation in Pekin on this question, it seems extraordinary that the Foreign Office should not have received this important information. In reply to a further question, the right hon. Gentleman said the agreement with the Chinese Government permitted foreigners to trade in steamers where native boats had been permitted, but this did not include every riverside town and station. I must, however, refer the right hon. Gentleman to the express declaration made in this House by his predecessor, Mr. Curzon, to which I have already alluded. I am informed by those engaged in trading on the Chinese inland waterways that native boats are permitted to trade with every riverside town and station and also escape with lower duties. This being so, it is obviously impossible for British steamers to compete, when they are required to have one steamer to trade between treaty ports and a second with the other riverside towns and stations, both boats running probably half empty; whereas, if, according to the agreement, they were allowed to load and discharge cargo at every riverside town and station, whether treaty ports or otherwise, one steamer would do where two are now employed, and a profitable trade would be carried on. I have repeatedly pressed the Government to insist upon the carrying out in its entirety of this agreement with the Chinese Government, and I should be glad to learn from the right hon. Gentleman to-night that the Government are determined to insist on this. With regard to South China and Western China, in the course of my journey I penetrated through the Yang-tsze gorges 1,600 miles up the Yang-tsze river. I travelled some distance into the rich province of Szechuan, with its 50,000,000 of industrious and prosperous inhabitants. I found this province covered by French Jesuit priests, who, in addition to the work of a religious propaganda, gather and transmit to the French Government information as to the mineral wealth and the commercial possibilities of the country. They have practically completed a geological survey of the great province, and now the French are pressing for exclusive rights to work minerals in six districts which they believe to be rich in mineral wealth. They have also prepared a chart of the Yang-tsze river, which was to me of invaluable service. As in South Africa it has been found that we actually had no knowledge of the country around Ladysmith, though it had been our military headquarters for years, so in China our charts are out of date, and therefore useless. An Admiralty chart of the Yang-tsze was prepared in 1861, and some slight corrections have been made since, but it is at the present time no guide to the navigation of a river of the changing character of the Yang-tsze. I have again and again drawn the attention of the Government to the agreement of January, 1896, between the British Government and the French Government, under which each nation bound itself to the other to use its best offices with the Chinese Government to secure each for the other similar and increased opportunities and facilities for trading with

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 1180.

Mr. Joseph Walton.

Yunnan and Szechuan. This agreement has been entirely disregarded by the French Government without calling forth any remonstrance from Her Majesty's Government. Nanning-fu, the treaty port on the West River, which was declared to be open more than a year ago (as was admitted the other night by the right hon. Gentleman) still remains unopened. And remembering the violent opposition on the part of the French to the opening of Nanning-fu, one cannot but feel that in all probability the delay in the opening is due to French influence. I hope to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that Her Majesty's Government will not allow further delay, as we have a right to expect that the state of affairs under which British goods have to be transhipped from Hong Kong, sent through Tonkin up to South-West China, and are subjected to a differential duty of 10 per cent. when passing through French territory, shall be ended without delay. The French are busily engaged in constructing a railway from Tonkin towards Yunnan, with the intention of ultimately carrying it forward into Szechuan, and of drawing the trade of South-West China down to the sea through French Indo-China, and with the declared expectation that sooner or later France will be able to annex Szechuan, Yunnan, Kwang-si, and Kwang-tung—the four great Chinese provinces to the north of her Indo-China possessions. When we have regard to the fact that seven-eighths of the imports into French Indo-China in 1885 went from England, Germany, and Switzerland, and that to-day, owing to differential duties in favour of French goods, amounting in some cases to 50 per cent., that three-fourths of the imports go from France, and only one-fourth from the rest of the world, we have an object lesson of the vital importance of resolutely upholding our just commercial rights in South and South-west China, if in the future we are not to see British trade strangled by differential tariffs in those regions also. Her Majesty's Government took great credit for the Kau-lung extension opposite Hong Kong. But I find that the value of the extension was very much reduced by the obstinacy with which the home authorities, contrary to the strongly expressed opinion of both civil and military authorities out there, in accepting the present boundary, which forms no natural defence, as the river is easily fordable in many places, and which is considerably south of the head of Mirs Bay, included in the concession, and besides contains no healthy camping ground, whereas they ought to have insisted that the boundary should be a natural line of mountains running slightly north of the head of Mirs Bay, and which would have given a healthy camping ground and a strong natural frontier. It will be in the recollection of the House that, owing to the opposition to the British when taking possession, we occupied Sam Chun, outside the boundary, where we had a most healthy camp. However, while I was at Hong Kong, instructions came from home that, under arrangements made with the Chinese Government, Sam Chun was to be evacuated. This, it was believed, had been done because the French had pointed out to the Chinese Government that we had been allowed to occupy a territory beyond the concession agreed upon, and that they were in consequence claiming further concessions around their newly-acquired treaty port in the South. If this is so, the result at any rate was not creditable to British diplomacy, for within a week of our evacuation of Sam Chun the French demands were conceded in full by the Chinese Government. Again and again in this House declarations of policy have been made by Her Majesty's Government which, if carried out, would have given the greatest satisfaction to everybody interested in the upholding and the extending of our commercial interests in the Far East. But, unfortunately, whether in regard to Agreements such as the Anglo-Russian Agreement in the matter of railway concessions, the opening of the inland waterways, the patrolling by gunboats of the Yang-tsze and the West River, or the terms and conditions upon which the acquisition of Wei-hai-Wei and Kau-lung have been secured, all alike have proved delusive and unsatisfactory. And I do not hesitate to say that in China our prestige and influence, which were predominant five years ago, are non-existent to-day. The Blue-book issued yesterday is unfortunately largely a further record of failure, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, to deal successfully with the Tsung-li-Yamen. This voluminous paper hardly contains one instance where a distinct diplomatic success has been achieved. What, then, ought Her Majesty's Govern-

ment to do, in view of accomplished facts in the Far East, in order to retrieve as far as possible the disastrous results of their neglect to pursue a firm and definite policy? The understanding arrived at between the United States Government and the other nations interested in the trade of China, securing, if faithfully observed, the maintenance of the open door, appears to afford another golden opportunity for seeking the further friendly co-operation of the great Powers in the promotion of administrative reforms, so greatly needed for the strengthening of the Imperial Government and for maintaining the integrity of China, the necessity for which the United States Government so fully recognise. All authorities in China agree that a serious mistake was made in allowing the deposition of the Emperor last year, and the assumption of the control of China by the reactionary Dowager Empress, who is a usurper and has no title whatever to occupy her present position. In view of the somewhat alarming news as to the disturbed condition and anti-foreign feeling in various parts of China, joint action ought, in my opinion, to be taken by the Powers to replace the Emperor on the throne; for it is undoubted that his sympathies are genuinely in favour of reform and the opening up of his country to trade. But, in addition to this, I would draw the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the fact that the Chinese Government would be powerless to resist the aggression, territorially and otherwise, of other Powers, unless she is enabled to have her naval and military forces re-organised. This she cannot do, unless her revenues are considerably increased. I would, therefore, strongly urge that the time has come for a revision of the customs tariff in China, and that at present the maritime customs import duty of 5 per cent., which is a maximum of 5 per cent., and in many cases really much less, should be substantially increased, on the condition that not only every riverside town and station, but also the interior of China is freely thrown open to foreign trade, and that some satisfactory rearrangement to secure the equitable levying of *likin* would be included in the agreement. The proportion should be fixed that is to be paid into the provincial and imperial treasuries respectively. Some system of paying officials, so as to render it possible for them to live without corruptly applying any portion of the revenues which pass through their hands, is essential. It would appear desirable that the increased revenues thus obtained by China should be allocated to specific purposes and should be given only on condition that an agreed amount be expended on the reorganisation of the military and naval forces of China, under officers to be jointly provided by those Powers who do not desire the partition of the country; that a further sum be applied to river conservancy with a view of improving the navigation of such great commercial arteries of the Chinese Empire as the Yang-tsze and West Rivers, under the control of international conservancy boards; and that there be a previous ratification, on satisfactory terms and conditions, of railway concessions promised to British concessionnaires. If joint action were taken by the United States of America, England, Japan, and Germany in support of the policy I have indicated, it would be difficult for Russia and France to hold aloof. I have always recognised the vast importance to British trade of the development of our Indian Empire. But the great Empire of China, with its four hundred millions of industrious trading people, its greater fertility of soil, and its enormous mineral resources, is in my opinion of still greater importance to the British nation, considered from a commercial point of view. I, therefore, earnestly hope that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs may be able to assure the House to-night that this policy of preserving China for the Chinese, and developing her resources in the interests alike of the population of that country and of all nations, will receive the vigorous and determined support of Her Majesty's Government; for in this way, and in this way alone, can the just influence and commercial rights of the British nation be preserved in the Far East.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The hon. Member who has just sat down has referred to the policy of the British Government, and he wishes us to infer that in every department, geographical and political, in China we ought to exercise exclusive control. There can be no greater mistake than to imagine that this country is capable of doing any such thing.

Mr. Joseph Walton.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Excuse me; I did not say so. What I said was that we should act in concert with the other Powers in regard to the open door. I say that, starting from that, we should seek in concert with the other Powers to bring about administrative reforms.

LORD BALCARRES: I do not think that we can act in concert with the other Powers, because I am quite convinced that the key of our position in China lies exclusively in the south. Russia holds control over China, and nothing we can do in concert with the other Powers can shake the power Russia has already grasped. I do not think the Foreign Office has been successful in combating the advance of Russia. I am sorry to say so, but that, I am convinced, is the present position. Russia from every point of view dominates everything north of the Yang-tsze valley. We hold a miserable little station at Wei-hai-wei which is perfectly worthless strategically, economically, politically, socially, and commercially. I really think that the position has become so acute that by far the most statesmanlike thing we can do is to abandon our position in the north, and make an agreement by which we shall have exclusive control, at any rate without the interference of Russia, in the Yang-tsze valley. What is the exact position of Russia in this matter? The hon. Member said Russia has the Pekin railway from the centre of Siberia across the Mongolian desert to Pekin. At the present moment you can do that journey in eleven days by camels. After about 100 miles of hills and mountains the country is perfectly flat. A railway along that route would undoubtedly enable travellers to reach Pekin in an extraordinarily short time. Plans have not yet been drawn out, and I do not believe the Russian Government has got the money or the engineering skill to make the railway. The hon. Member spoke of the Russian railway as a magnificent railway. I think the hon Member for North Paddington will agree with me in saying that it is not a magnificent railway. They have no engineering skill in Russia. There is only one railway tunnel in Russia, and it was made by a Frenchman. If they have to get over a mountain they climb over it, whereas our engineers would penetrate the mountain, at a saving of thirty, forty, or fifty miles. They refuse to put a station between two points which would naturally be served by the railway. The reason for that is that the Siberian, not appreciating anything emanating from Russia, refuses to pay blackmail to the engineers of the line, who consequently say, "If you don't pay us you will not have a railway station." The line is single. The engines only burn wood, and the tenders of the engines get on fire about once in three days. The ballasting of the line is extremely bad. Where the railway has to cross a gully a great fall of rain or a flood carries away the line. Of course the trains stop at all the stations, and the result is that about nine miles is about the average distance you can cover in an hour. I was told by the Government Prosecutor that the object of his journey was to prosecute certain unknown individuals for stealing a train. These men stopped a train by the use of false lights; they unhooked nine wagons, and then removed the light. The train proceeded and the wagons were left. In order to prevent a subsequent accident the wagons were rolled over an embankment. This is not a line which is going to have the great commercial importance attributed to it by the hon. Member. The line must be substantially reformed if it is to be of much value. But there is one point connected with the line, slow and bad as it is, which must receive the attention of the Government. I frankly admit that I think the Government has not been successful in combating the influence, not of Russia in Russia, but of Russia engaged in the north of China. What is the position on the Pacific Ocean? There is Vladivostok, with at least 35,000 troops in it. I remember counting fifty-six military buildings in process of construction during last October, varying from 50 to 350 feet in frontage. There is Port Arthur, where the hon. Member has been, but where I was not allowed by the police to go. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman possesses a better reputation than I do in the Far East. At Port Arthur there are from 30,000 to 35,000 men. Most people would say that 70,000 men to guard an Empire of that size is not an unreasonable number, especially in view of the very threatening attitude adopted by Japan. But these two places do not represent in the smallest degree the

military enterprise of Russia. The most striking thing that one notices when travelling through Eastern Siberia is the fact that everywhere you see new towns occupied exclusively by the military. I remember going through one place which, five years ago, was a little town with one little wooden church, and perhaps three or four hundred inhabitants. It is now a town with a magnificent cathedral and at least 10,000 troops. These towns are built by the soldiers. There are thousands and thousands of soldiers in the Far East who have never had a rifle in their hands. There is a little stretch of line leading down to the Pacific from Vladivostok, about 500 versts in length. That line is managed exclusively by soldiers. The man who collects the tickets, the stoker, the driver—in fact, all connected with the line—are military men. Whether or not these men are very formidable as soldiers, I cannot say, but I suppose they are put there because there is no population either capable of carrying out these railway works or willing to do so, the men employed in that part being capable of only manual labour. But here is the situation in a nutshell. China at the present moment is dominated by Russian influence. British influence in China—I am not speaking of our influence with the Tsung-li-Yamen, but in China generally — is absolutely and, in my opinion, almost hopelessly subordinated to the immense power which has been gained by Russia. That power is not of so modern a growth as many people, and especially the critics of the Government, are inclined to suppose. It has been growing steadily, persistently, and silently for five-and-twenty years; but this startling development began five years ago, and during the last three years that Power has become regularly established. In a short time they will have linked up the railway joining the central station of Siberia with Vladivostok. There are immense engineering difficulties, and I am sure the railway will take very many more years to complete than the Russians say. They hope, at the present moment, to have a through service from St. Petersburg to the Pacific in fifteen months time, but they will have to greatly reform their methods if that is to be done. Just a word with regard to the policy largely the result of this enterprise in the north of China. The hon. Member desires us, in concert with other Powers, as he said, to put a finger into every Chinese pie. I most devoutly hope the Government will strenuously refrain from interfering with anything connected with Manchuria. I hope also that the Government will refrain from doing anything to uphold the Chinese dynasty. It may sound a radical change to suggest to any Government, but the result of interference in any dynastic question will, I am convinced, lead to a further increase of Russian power. I hope the Government will not take such small advantages as it can take in the north of China in order to secure a Parliamentary case. Wei-hai-Wei has been quoted as a triumph. It is not a triumph. It has led us into the very gravest peril. If we had been content a few years ago to limit ourselves strictly to one field or area, which had a population far greater than this country can ever hope to supply, we should have avoided a most critical state of affairs with Russia, we should have preserved our prestige in China, which is now almost irretrievably lost, and the Government would not have suffered the loss of reputation resulting from that which has occurred all over the world. I hope, therefore, the Government will strictly limit itself to the sphere of influence which it has chosen for its own efforts.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): I cannot join in the condemnation pronounced by the hon. Member opposite of what he calls the "humiliating inactivity" of the Government. I think he has lost sight of the fact that the reason why our progress appears not to have been so rapid in the Far East is because he compares our present progress with that of Powers which have only just entered the field. Take, for instance, a comparison of Wei-hai-Wei with German activity or with Russian activity at Port Arthur. A fairer comparison would be that of Hong Kong with Port Arthur and with Kiau-chau. We have a splendid military base and a splendid commercial harbour there, and I have all along understood that Wei-hai-wei was only to be a second military base.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: A counterpoise to Port Arthur.

MR. MOON: But there is a point in regard to which I certainly think the onus lies on the Government to show

that they have not lost a great opportunity. I refer to supporting the cause of reform in China. By doing so in the future, or by having done so in the past, we should strengthen China against adverse enemies, we should further the cause of civilisation, and we should secure and maintain our reputation in the Far East. As a great civilising power, I think we should seize the opportunity of promoting Western reforms. China is not like India, where the educated people are rather a dreamy people; the educated people in China, apart from all their mandarin culture, are a very hard-headed shrewd folk. To such people Western civilisation would, I am quite sure, have been acceptable. By promoting these reforms we should have created a solidarity in China which would have enabled her to continue to exist as a buffer between ourselves and that great Power in the North-east of Asia, whose methods and ideas, whose character and government, are so different from our own as to be, in fact, antagonistic. That result, I think, we might have secured. At least, I suggest that it lies on the Government to show that they had reasons for not interposing, instead of allowing the Empress to initiate a sanguinary *coup d'état*. The young Emperor had a project of reform for every branch of administration, and his ambition was to play in China the part played by Peter the Great in Russia. He wished to emulate that great man, who by his own initiative changed the character and position of a European nation. I have on previous occasions ventured to give statistics showing that in various parts of China there was an immense demand for Western literature and Western instruction. That, I hear, has now come to an end. The *coup d'état* of the Dowager Empress was regarded by certain persons as merely an attempt to moderate in Oriental ways precipitate and subversive measures of reform. That view, perhaps, had some plausibility for a few months, but during the last twelve months we have seen the results but too clearly. I have recently had a communication from Mr. Timothy Richards, an American in Pekin, and a well-known authority in these matters. He points out that the old curriculum has been restored in the place of modern Western education; the Pekin University, which used to have 1,000 students, now has no more than 200; a similar institution started in Nankin has been closed; many Anglo-Chinese schools supported by Chinese reformers in different parts of the country are closed; and then he refers to newspapers and other reform measures which are entirely suspended. On that point it is necessary to add one more item of evidence. I would mention the edict published by the Empress at the beginning of February, which demands a return to the old manner of study according to Confucius for examinations for official rank, and the abolition of studies in what are called the new and depraved subjects. It is over fifty years since we intervened in China. It may be urged that the circumstances have changed, and that by supporting the reform movement we would force Russia to support reaction. If that is so one would like to hear it stated by the Government. There is only one other point to which I would refer. The hon. Member for Barnsley as well as my noble friend has lost sight of the commanding position of Russia by reason of her geographical position. That was particularly pointed out in the other House last session when a noble Lord dwelt on the thousands of miles of frontier for which Russia was coterminous with China. When we consider our immense expansion in every part of the world, and when we look at Russia and know that Russia can only expand on her own frontiers, can we be surprised if she develops in the direction of Persia and the Trans-Caspian Railway and in the North-east? I think the co-operation of the Great Powers interested in the Far East in matters commercial is a very hopeful sign, but I do not think we can look to such a combination as being permanent I hope that if the Government have lost an opportunity in the past they will not fail to be vigilant in order to seize any opportunity that may present itself hereafter of advancing our commercial interests.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): Although I have not the personal acquaintance with China possessed by hon. Gentlemen who have spoken, I have endeavoured to follow the Parliamentary experience of the question. I have also endeavoured, in the very short time which has been at our disposal, to look into the Blue book just published. With some of the observations of the noble Lord opposite and of my hon. friend below me I

entirely agree. I entirely agree with the noble Lord's remarks in reference to Manchuria. Manchuria, it seems to me, is a part of Russia, and should have been recognised by Her Majesty's Government as being absolutely within the control of Russia as soon as she began to expand. If that had been done frankly at the beginning this country would have been spared a good deal of useless negotiation, humiliation, and expenditure. But we know that that was not the attitude adopted in the early stages of this Chinese question. The Government embarked on a course of policy which was apparently prompted solely by the desire to enter into political rivalry with Russia in China, and to give China, or to lead her to expect that she would get, active support in withstanding the demands of Russia. So far as Manchuria is concerned that failed, and Manchuria now practically belongs to the Russian Empire. I agree with what was said by one hon. Gentleman opposite when he suggested we had better give up any attempts to press forward the British claim, commercial or otherwise, north of Pekin, and devote ourselves to our interests in other parts of China. The hon. Member for Barnsley in the course of his remarks stated that there had been "a humiliating inactivity on the part of the British Government." I cannot agree with him on that point. My personal survey of this last Blue-book, as well as of previous ones, leads me to the conclusion that if there is humiliation that humiliation is rather because of the activity of the Government than in consequence of their inactivity. Certainly you cannot fairly accuse them of humiliating inactivity. It is unfortunate that this book should not have been produced before. The last despatches contained in it are nearly three months old, and there can be no reason why it should not have been placed in our hands at an earlier period. Hon. Members have not had an opportunity of fully examining the many interesting documents contained in the volume, which is really a history of what Her Majesty's Government have been doing or attemping to do in China during the last year. I may be singular, but it does seem to me that a good deal of that record is anything but pleasant reading for the nation and the public. Nine-tenths of this Blue-book is composed of negotiations between the Foreign Office here and the British Embassy at Pekin endeavouring to force upon the Tsung-li-Yamen the claims of various British concessionnaires. There are a number of syndicates mentioned which have apparently gone out to China, obtained an introduction to the British Embassy there, and practically asked them to enforce their demands upon the Tsung-li-Yamen for the rights of mining, or railways, or whatever it might be. Lord Salisbury, last year, in a speech on the subject succinctly stated that the policy in regard to China was a policy of railways and concessions. It is not pleasant to read of this constant pressure being put upon the Chinese Government to make concessions. I cannot express this point more forcibly than did the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in a debate in this House a year ago.* Protesting against this constant concession hunting on the part of British subjects, and the way in which they endeavour to put on the screw on the British Embassy to obtain concessions, he used these words—

"We cannot go there and, as an act of pure piracy, insist that over a large extent of country, every mine, every line of railway, every public improvement for which money is provided shall be handed over to any concessionaire, but we have, of course, used our diplomatic influence to see that Great Britain received a due share of this development."

I should like to give one other instance of what has taken place during the last year. There is one despatch which is a particularly humiliating one to read. It is to be found on page 149 of the Blue-book.† Lord Salisbury telegraphs in the month of June last as to interest due to the British and Chinese Corporation; I do not know who they are, but I suppose they are one of these syndicates—

"I am informed by the British and Chinese Corporation that one month's interest on the Northern Railways Loan is outstanding which must be provided by the 16th July, with a further month's interest, in order that they may meet the first coupon which is due on the 1st August.

"You should press the Chinese Government officially to make good the balance required in pursuance of the guarantee given by them.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxvi., page 227 (8th February, 1899).

† See "Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of China" (Command Paper, No. 93, 1900).

"At the same time you may intimate to the Chinese Government that the regard paid by them to our representations in the question of the Northern Railways and other matters, recently the subjects of discussion with them, will greatly affect our attitude in regard to the territory now held by us outside the Conventional extension of Hong Kong."

What is that? Shortly put, it is that on behalf of this corporation who are afraid that their interest would be in arrear, Lord Salisbury telegraphs out to the British Embassy to put pressure on the Chinese Government who had given some guarantee to pay this money, and if they do not do so the British Embassy is to make itself politically nasty in the south of China, thousands of miles from where this railway exists. I suppose that this is the corporation to whose prospectus the British Government last year unfortunately gave to a certain degree its imprimatur. I do not think the British Government ought to have allowed its name to appear in that way upon the prospectus of a financial company, and this is one of the humiliating results of that conduct. I do hope, for the sake of our good name, that these constant communications between our Foreign Office here and the British Embassy in China for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain concessions for financial enterprises will soon come to an end. We have heard a good deal about the "trail of finance" in other parts of the world. To my mind there is a great deal too much of the trail of finance over this Blue-book in regard to our affairs in China. A year ago, in answer to a question, the right hon. Gentleman told us that already over 2,800 miles of railway concessions had been made. Not upon a single mile of territory has a single step been taken to put into operation any one of these railway concessions. When pressure is put upon authorities in China I understand that a good deal of money must pass to obtain these concessions. I hope the Government do not devote any secret service money in China for this purpose, and that whatever the syndicates may do, our hands are absolutely free from anything of that sort. We have had in the course of the past few years a constant change in the policy of the Government in regard to China, and apparently we are going to have another change now. My hon. friend has under-rated the change of policy he has in view. He has embarked upon a very wide policy which he has described as not one of aggression. I should like from the Government some information as to what they propose to do in reference to the suggestion that we are to undertake the drilling of the Chinese army. If we begin to undertake responsibilities for providing China with a military force, we shall be embarking upon a work of which we do not know the end. We have already assumed important additional responsibilities there since the present Government came into office. We have Wei-hai-Wei leased to us as long as the Russians hold Port Arthur; we have undertaken the policing of the Yang-tsze River, and the West River, and these are very serious political responsibilities entailing considerable expenditure, which will probably be increased in the future. We desire to know what the Government is going to do with Wei-hai-wei. It is quite clear that the original intention for which Wei-hai-wei was acquired has been abandoned, and that policy has been practically given up. I gather from a statement in the Navy Estimates that the number of our naval force on the Yang-tsze River and the West River is to be increased, and that we are building one or two gunboats for those rivers. When a foreign Power undertakes the control of a thousand miles of a river like the Yang-tsze and its rapids and the West River, it is a policy which entails considerable political responsibility and may possibly lead us into serious trouble. We should like to get some definition of the responsibility which Her Majesty's Government consider they are undertaking when they state that they are policing these rivers. Another important matter is the correspondence with the United States, and it is greatly to the credit of the American Secretary of State that he has got some tangible results. We have assented to the policy of the open door, and this course has also been followed by Germany and Japan. I should just like to call attention to a statement in Mr. Choate's letter.* He says that what he asks is that the various Powers within their spheres of influence shall seek to maintain the open-door policy, but he goes on to say that the United States Government will not in any way commit itself to any recognition of exclusive rights of any Power within spheres of

* See Paper last referred to, page 303.

influence. When we get a statement like that from a first-class Power like the United States, with a large and increasing trade with China, in which it declares categorically that it will not recognise these exclusive spheres of interest or influence, it ought to make us pause and consider whether we are going to extend these spheres of influence, and what is the exact weight we put upon our position in the sphere of influence or interest which I understand we claim in the Yang-tsze valley. Lord Salisbury is exceedingly cautious in his statement upon this question, for he does not name a single one of the spheres of influence which he claims that Great Britain possesses. We should like to know from the hon. Gentleman if the Government in the future are going to proceed further in this policy of spheres of interest or influence in China. They indicated definitely last year that this would be their policy, and in that they had the approval of my hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire. Do the Government intend to proceed further in that direction? After the statement which has been made by the American Government that does not seem likely to turn out a profitable line of policy, for it is one in which we shall not have the co-operation of the United States, and I doubt whether we shall have the co-operation of Japan. I think it is about time that Her Majesty's Government declared their general lines of policy in regard to China.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): It was not my intention to take part in this debate, because I have not yet been able to master the Papers recently laid before the House on this subject, and in the few remarks I intend to make I shall be as brief as possible. The fact that my hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division and other hon. Gentlemen who have spoken have recently been in China has no doubt added very considerably to the interest of the discussion. There is no doubt whatever that the spirit of adventure which leads men of our race and blood to seek fresh fields for effort and enterprise is as strong as ever in this country. At the same time I think we are apt to lose sight of the fact that we are busy in other parts of the world, and to blame the Government for a vacillating and hesitating policy in China, whereas we had been more fair to them if we recognised, as the noble Lord to-night recognised, that the development of which we now see the fruit in China in the great advance made by Russia ought to be dated at least a generation back. Not for five years, but for twenty-five years at least, has that movement been going on. It is quite true that we have lost ground, and that, as compared with ourselves, Russia has now a position of greater influence than it had twenty five years ago, but that period has not been all loss to us. We have been busy developing South Africa, Canada, and other parts of the world, and I am not disposed to look at a question of this kind without remembering that we have been busy in effort and enterprise elsewhere. At the same time, if we look at the conduct of the Government for the last five years, and at what has been done by them in China, we must confess to a considerable sense of disappointment. The noble Lord reminds us of Wei-hai-wei, and many hon. Members have expressed grave doubts as to the wisdom of the action of the Government in regard to it, but it has never been so boldly stated as it was to-night that the action of the Government was a concession to the force of public and Parliamentary opinion in this country. The discussion does not seem to me to show that we have got very much further in the adoption of a definite policy with regard to our position in China and our relations with the Chinese Empire. It may be very difficult—I have no doubt it is very difficult. The very fact that our efforts are not concentrated in development in any one direction, and that we have other irons in the fire, other matters of interest and great importance to attend to, makes it more difficult for us to have a single eye and a single aim in the prosecution of a policy in regard to China; but if this debate does nothing else than to clear our minds a little as to the possibilities of the future with regard to China, I think it will have done a great deal of good. My hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division said that the great object of his policy was China for the Chinese, and if that could only be recognised by the Chinese and by other Powers interested in the development of China it might smooth matters; but we cannot leave out of sight the inevitable accompaniment of the development of a new country, and without going

into details I think the Blue-book shows that while there is much of "China for the Chinese," possibly in the future, there is a great deal of "concessions for concessionnaires" in the present. There are, it seems to me, three conflicting policies and principles which are laid down with regard to our position in China—we have the open door, the treaty of Tien-tsin, and the principle of spheres of interest or influence—and it is very desirable that we should know how far and in what respects these three policies overlap and conflict. The open door as referred to in the despatches in the Blue-book is perfectly clear. It only concerns the Powers who are parties to the agreement, and is satisfactory as far as it goes. But it must be admitted it gives us nothing we have not had before. It may improve our position in the future, it may be a safeguard for the future, but we had the privileges it proposes to confer on us for all practical purposes in the past. In June last the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs gave a most explicit statement as to our policy in China.* He said it was an essential part of the policy of the Government that special protection for our trade in the Yang-tsze valley should be assured. Then he said that by means of transit facilities we should endeavour to provide that our trade should be free from undue taxation, and, thirdly, he looked forward to the opening of further inland waterways. My hon. friend speaks with so much knowledge and information that it is not necessary for me to add anything to the questions he suggests to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in regard to the further opening of inland waterways, but with regard to spheres of influence I think a word may usefully be said. The noble Lord who was Member for York last year† solemnly warned the House of the danger of our drifting into the sphere of influence policy. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs himself pointed out that though our privileges in the Yang-tsze region were to be special privileges, they were not to be exclusive privileges in the same sense as German privileges in Shangtung or French privileges in the southern provinces of China. That suggests the question, are our Yang-tsze Valley privileges really strong, valid, and potent for the purpose for which my hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division asks? It seems to me that his criticism is amply justified if we cannot regard our privileges in the Yang-tsze Valley as in any way a counterweight to the privileges of the Germans in Shangtung or the French in the southern provinces of China. My hon. friend has put some questions to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs which he may find it difficult to answer. For my part, having in my recollection the remarks of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs last year, and also the remarks of the noble Lord the then Member for York, I am inclined to think that my hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division wishes to push us too far in regard to this sphere of influence policy. What may be the inevitable result if we adopt for ourselves such a large region as the Yang-tsze Valley?

*MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I am entirely opposed to spheres of influence, and entirely in favour of the open door and equal privileges for all nations.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I understood my hon. friend to suggest, at the end of his speech, some sweeping reforms which he hoped this country, in concert with other nations, might endeavour to carry out. Practically, they would amount to the international control of a population of 400 millions of people, leading to as many difficulties in the future as the quasi-international control of South Africa and Egypt may do. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs has not committed himself to any policy of that kind. He said last year that we could not make the Yang-tsze valley a province like Shantung, because we were not prepared to take the responsibility of governing what is practically a third of China. That is a much safer limit of policy than the sweeping suggestions of my hon. friend, who, no doubt, is an idealist and looks far into the future. But, as my hon. friend will remember, one of the great schemes of the noble Lord who was Member for York was that we should undertake the reorganisation of the Chinese army and so strengthen it that the Chinese Empire would be able to stand against all comers. The noble Lord who spoke tonight warned us

* 9th June, 1899 (See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxii., page 800).

† *Ibid.*, page 784 (Speech of Lord Charles Beresford).

against that policy. I would like a little light as to what is being done in the Yang-tsze valley. My hon. friend described it as having a population of fifty millions of peaceful, industrial people; and he went on to say that there were 500,000 stalwart sailors engaged in the carrying trade in that region, who would view with grave concern the arrival of steamers carrying the British flag. Well, it would be a melancholy thing if, in our endeavours to maintain China for the Chinese, we should have a repetition of the circumstances that occurred in China a generation or two ago. I hope that we may have, before the debate closes, some light as to how this theory of the open door does not conflict with the Treaty of Tien-tsin and the spheres of influence policy. It was said last year that not one of our privileges under the Treaty of Tien-tsin have been taken from us, and that we hold the Chinese Government to that treaty. I should like to remind the House that the relative proportion of our total trade to that with China is only three per cent. I hope, with the hon. Member for Barnsley, that that trade may be extended. I believe that the Chinese have no better friends in developing their country than the British people, but my sympathies are rather with a policy of caution and concentration, not only in China, but in other parts of the world. We are too apt to forget that the policy of expansion has its drawbacks, because it multiplies the points that are vulnerable. The noble Lord the late Member for York, who could not be accused of a desire to curb the reasonable development of the Empire, told the Committee last year that he did not believe anyone in this country wanted to see a single acre added to the British Empire. He said that the British Empire was too big already; and in almost prophetic words the noble Lord pointed out that if we had disturbances at the Cape, or in India, the problem would be not naval but military, and difficult of solution, even with conscription. I hope that nothing will be said to-night which will encourage the belief that we do not adhere to the policy of caution and concentration.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Although the hon. Member who moved this motion, which seems to be a severe condemnation of the policy of the Government, or of the conduct of the Government during the past year, introduced his motion with a knowledge of his subject which we all admired, and with a command of the Chinese nomenclature which we might envy; and although the House has listened to him with great pleasure, I cannot help feeling that the condition of the House during a considerable part of the discussion is, perhaps, the best answer to the motion which he has put down on the Paper. Those of us who recollect the character of the discussions on China two years ago, and the full House which was attracted when we discussed this question twelve months ago, must feel that there is something besides the absorbing interest we feel in the military operations in South Africa to account for the comparative slackness of the discussion to-night. I do not say that in order to detract from the importance of the subject, but to indicate that it is the feeling of the House, this is not the occasion for a vigorous censure of the Government, or for giving the acute stimulus to their exertions which the hon. Member for Barnsley believes is necessary. The hon. Members who followed the hon. Member for Barnsley have, to a large extent, devoted themselves to answering him and, to some extent, to answering each other. My noble friend the Member for the Chorley Division, who, I venture to say, is heard too infrequently in this House, delivered an admirable and interesting discourse to-night. Although he agreed with the conclusions of the hon. Gentleman opposite, he disagreed *in toto* with most of his premises, and his particular statement of policy, with which he concluded his speech, has also attracted the censure of the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire and the hon. and gallant Member for Forfarshire, who has just sat down. And, therefore, I may stand upon this—that the Government, although no Member has spoken immediately in defence of it, has not been without defenders. One other point which has struck me very much during this discussion is that, although we were discussing the Blue-book which dealt with the affairs of last year—a document which I regret could not be put in the hands of hon. Members earlier, but the dis-

Capt. Sinclair.

cussion came on rather unexpectedly, and, in addition to that, the despatches come up to the end of last year, and it is never possible to bring out a Chinese Blue-book except after a considerable interval — although we have been dealing with the affairs of last year, practically hardly any of the criticisms which have been presented against the Government had to do with their conduct during the past year. We have had a strong impeachment of the original character of our negotiations with regard to Port Arthur, and with regard to the taking of Wei-hai-wei. We have had a great deal said about the advantages gained by other nations in regard to concessions, and the comparative inefficiency of the advantages obtained by our Government in the same direction. We have also heard a good deal about the state of affairs in Manchuria. But nearly all of these points refer to matters which were antecedent to the period which we are now discussing, and I think you will search the Blue-book in vain, bulky as it is, for any proof of those diplomatic and commercial defeats which the hon. Member for Barnsley declares had illustrated the whole of the efforts of Her Majesty's Government during the past year. I will take one point alone. The hon. Member points out how little we have gained from the Yamen during the past year. But he does not, I think, suppose for a moment that we can deal with these matters precisely as we please. His complaint is that we have too little influence with the Yamen, that the Yamen keeps us at arm's length, that what we might achieve in a better governed country we ought to achieve in China if only we had not lost the whole of our prestige. Have foreign Powers met with no difficulties from the Yamen? Is there not evidence even in that Blue-book that every foreign Power which has been dealing with the Yamen has found sometimes an obstructive spirit, and in almost every case a difficulty in its dealings which could not be overcome? I do not wish to emphasise this too strongly; I do not wish to put my finger on every case, because possibly it might produce a certain amount of feeling in other quarters. But in all the more important cases the hon. Gentleman will find either that there has been a direct refusal by the Yamen, as is shown in the case of that railway to Pekin, on which he said a few words, or that there has been a refusal based on an objection taken by this Government. I saw it was stated the other day that the organisation of the French concession at Shanghai had been entirely stopped by the Yamen because Her Majesty's Ministers would not assent to it. That is only one illustration; and I am quite certain of this, that for every illustration which he gave us of the impotence of Sir Claude MacDonald in these negotiations he would find that we were able to give him similar instances in respect to other Powers. Now, I should like to say at once that I do not propose this evening to trouble the House with any detailed argument with regard to Manchuria. I know perfectly well that it is possible to reckon up the large number of troops and the great works which are being carried out by the Russian Government in Manchuria; but when I hear these arguments I am very much inclined to wonder at the temerity of the hon. Gentleman opposite. Knowing that we are a maritime Power, and that Russia has a land frontier of some 3,000 or 4,000 miles with China, I am somewhat surprised at the spirit with which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barnsley attacks the question, as if it were the business of Her Majesty's Government to challenge the Government of Russia for possession of a province which we do not desire to possess ourselves and which China, unfortunately, is not able to retain without the vigorous support of Her Majesty's Government or of some other Power. But, leaving that, the hon. Member says that there are other matters in regard to which there have been grave failures on our part. He specially alluded to the Kau-lung extension. The hon. Gentleman has been to Kau-lung and I have not, and he has heard there opinions which, no doubt, he has repeated in this House, as to the large extent of territory which it was desirable to take in order to secure what he considered an effective boundary. But let us look into the question a little more closely. What is it we asked for at Kau-lung and obtained? We obtained 200 square miles addition to the colony of Hong Kong. That, in itself, is a not inconsiderable extension. In taking possession of that it is quite true that we were forced, owing to the opposition which was threatened to us by disorganised Chinese troops, to take this

territory of Sam Chun, which the hon. Member seems to regret so much that we have given up.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Hear, hear!

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes, but when the cause of offence has passed, I ask the House whether the punishment which we were forced to inflict for that cause of offence should not be withdrawn too? It really amounts to this—that, according to the hon. Gentleman, we were to do an act not justified, at all events, by any legal convention or agreement: we were to take a considerable further tract of country because we were temporarily obstructed in taking the extension at Hong Kong to which we were entitled. I think that, as a matter of public right and justice, in restoring that territory to the Chinese we were not acting amiss.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I said we ought to have taken a further tract of country in the first instance, and thus have secured a proper frontier.

MR. BRODRICK: I quite grant that he wants a more effective boundary, but I would ask the hon. Gentleman whether he and his friends ever considered, in their desire to have this extended boundary, the probable number of troops which would be required to maintain that boundary? Let me say one word about concessions. I do not think it has been seriously advanced by anybody except the hon. Member that Her Majesty's Government have been backward in obtaining concessions during the past year. Of this large volume (the Blue-book) an enormous amount is due to the correspondence in connection with concessions which were desired by various persons, for whom Her Majesty's Government did their best. But we cannot force these concessions from the Chinese Government. They are concessions, let us remember, for mining, for railways, and for other advantages for which absolutely no payment is to be made in most cases—or at all events, no payment of which we are aware. Therefore we cannot, as a matter of right and justice, insist in every case where a British subject, sometimes without any serious capital at his back, comes forward and states that he desires to have the whole mining concessions throughout an entire province. That has been the case in some instances. We cannot in those cases declare to the Yamen that unless the concessions are granted we shall use force in order to compel them to do so. But I notice that the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire actually fell foul of us for doing too much. [HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] He said that Lord Salisbury had been obliged to explain that our policy in regard to the restoration of the land at Sam Chun would be to some extent guided by the Chinese Government's performance of their undertaking in regard to the Northern Railway. The Newchang Railway was a special case. Her Majesty's Government allowed it to be stated on the prospectus that they had taken note of the agreement with the Chinese Government under which the railway was to be constructed. Therefore we were perfectly justified in putting pressure on the Chinese Government to see that their engagements were carried out. One hon. Member stated, and stated very truly, that we heard very little about the construction of these railways, or about the development of these mining enterprises for which concessions were granted. Well, if it is the fact, as indeed it is, that in too many of these cases concessions have been obtained and no work been done, then I think the Chinese Government is justified in declaring that, until some substantial progress has been made with these schemes, they will not give concessions for other railways; and Her Majesty's Government have, I submit to the House, in accepting to a large extent their declaration, only taken a wise and prudent course—a course which any business man would have been inclined to take in similar circumstances. Once it is found that these concessions, like those, for instance, which are being worked by the Pekin Syndicate, are being undertaken seriously and pushed forward, the Government will not be found wanting in pressing the Chinese Government to grant further concessions. Then the hon. Member touched upon a very proper question when he came to the difficulties with regard to the internal navigation of China. My predecessor, Lord Curzon, made a very definite declaration on that subject on 25th February, 1898. It is quite true that some difficulties have been found in working out that pledge, seeing that there are two quite distinct customs duties. The Chinese Govern-

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. liv., page 31.

ment have thought it necessary, up to the present time, to insist that one class of steamers should deal with the Treaty ports, and another class of steamers with the intervening ports. If it could be shown that Her Majesty's Government had sat down and allowed British trade to lose its position in consequence of any want of effort on their part, then I think the hon. Member's strictures might be to some extent justified. But that is not the case at all. In the first place, there is no man in China, either now or in the past, who has done so much for obtaining proper treatment with regard to *likin* and the system of transit passes, both on the West River and the Yang-tsze, as Sir Claude Macdonald. In the same way at this moment, and for some months past, Sir Claude MacDonald, aided by the very active consuls in the various ports, on the West river and the Yang-tsze, has been pressing strongly for the simplification of the regulations with regard to internal navigation. I have myself, within the last few days, conferred with a gentleman who has recently come home from China, and I believe I may say that the suggestions he has made will be pressed by Her Majesty's Government on the Chinese Government. I will only say that a complete change of the whole national idea of throwing their close trade in small junks into open competition is one which we cannot expect to achieve in a very few weeks. At the same time, the reasonableness of it is, on the face of it, so great that I look forward to our continuing to press for it with some good hopes of success. There is one more point with regard to the waterways. The hon. Gentleman made some excellent suggestions with regard to what class of steamers should ply on the Yang-tsze and the West river. Those points I will certainly bring before the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is most anxious to ascertain the class of steamer most likely to be useful. In pursuance of the pledge given to the House last year, attempts were made by two gunboats to ascend the rapids in order to see whether it is possible not only to improve the navigation, but to place boats on the upper Yang-tsze. Those attempts are to be renewed at the proper state of the water, which is, I think, in April or May, and I hold to the full the pledge given last year that the Government will take up that question with the full intention both of seeing that our trade is properly protected, and also, as far as we can, the conduct of that trade by British steamers. These are really the main points which it is attempted to make against us. I should like, however, to refer to one or two other more general matters before I sit down. The hon. Gentleman seems to think that in all these questions one nation should be able to impress the Yamen with the reasonableness of the proposal; and, failing that, that the reforms desired would be reached if only there was a concert of the Powers. He thinks it could be done if the nations arrived at a general resolution to press these reforms on the Chinese Government. Has the hon. Gentleman considered this question from the point of view taken by my noble friend? The policy which he foreshadowed involves not one question, but a collection of difficulties. There is the question of the dynasty, there is the question affecting the collection of taxation, there is the question of the customs, the *likin*; there is the question of payment of officials—all these and more are questions which he proposed should be dealt with by one Power or the concert of the Powers. But these questions taken together simply mean the government of China—that is the government of an empire of 400,000,000 people; governed with difficulty and to some extent not governed at all, or misgoverned under the name of an Emperor whose edicts they revere. If that is a great undertaking for one Power to face alone, what is the prospect opened to us of the combined action of foreign Powers? We have already had some experience of the concerted action of the Great Powers. We had quite recently the experience with regard to Crete. There we had the case of a small island—not the object of ambition probably to any of the Powers which were engaged for some considerable time in an endeavour to settle it. What was our experience of our endeavours in regard to Crete in concert with other Powers? Why, it took weeks and months, it almost took years, to carry out the smallest reforms or a settlement with regard to questions which some of us certainly thought capable of prompt settlement in a very short time. Then if we want to have another illustration in the same direction we may take the case of Samoa, where Germany, ourselves, and the United

States of America were concerned. There we had small islands and a meagre population—certainly no large number of inhabitants. Those difficulties certainly have been solved so that each Power now knows what its responsibilities and duties are.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Her Majesty's Government has not already agreed to act in concert with the United States and other Powers in bringing forward reforms in the administration of China, to strengthen the Imperial Government and preserve the integrity of China. Those were the special points which the British Government assented to most cordially.

*MR. BRODRICK: There is a great difference between what was agreed upon between the British Government and the United States Government as to the open door and dealing with the Chinese Government.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: The agreement was for administrative reform.

*MR. BRODRICK: The wording will not cover the government of China. No one can be more anxious than we are to bring united pressure to bear in the proper direction, but when it comes to the government of the country, then I think, and perhaps the House will agree with me, that the matter does not appear so simple to all of us as it seems to appear to the hon. Gentleman.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: But that is what you agreed to do.

*MR. BRODRICK: Let me say one further word as to the charge against Her Majesty's Government of having throughout this year indulged in what is called "a do nothing policy." What does the hon. Member say to-night? He says we had five years ago a prestige and a paramount influence which has now vanished into nothing through a policy of drift and surrender. Well, I am not quite clear that our influence was paramount five years ago. The noble Lord who has just come back from China denied that altogether; but without going into all that, what grounds does the hon. Member find for saying that our influence now is non-existent? What is there in the papers which justifies him in saying that our influence and interest in Pekin come to nothing? The House will find that in the last five years, like other Powers, we have been able to protect the interests of those of our nationality in various places where there are murders or outrages in China. There were four cases in the past year, including the case of Mr. Brookes, who was murdered recently, and the Government in every case secured the exemplary punishment of the criminals and obtained compensation, and in the last case the magistrate at the scene of the murder was dismissed; the prompt action which the Government took in these cases and the response to it, showing that in these respects it is untrue to say that our prestige is non-existent at Pekin. If we are to regard our position as compared with that of foreign Governments, I would ask him to look at the Russian concession at Hankow and the French concession at Shanghai. We find in both cases that Her Majesty's Government secured from the Chinese Government fair treatment, and also from the French and Russian Governments. Of the many subjects which have been dealt with and concluded, mentioned in the Blue-books, the House will not find a single case where the British Government have been obliged to give way or give up the claims they put forward. I challenge the hon. Member to state any single diplomatic triumph by which Her Majesty's Government has been worsted in the course of the year. I have already alluded to what we have accomplished, and I can only say that, from information which has reached us, neither has British trade suffered in China nor has British prestige suffered in any respect. As I ventured to say last year, having regard to the great rapidity with which events followed one another in China during the previous year, it is desirable that we should now proceed with a policy of concentration. It is the policy of the Government, without creating further responsibilities necessitating the employment of a large number of troops, to keep open the waterways of China for our trade, and to secure to British subjects a full share of opportunities to open out China while securing from all countries the recognition of the principle of the open door. We shall also endeavour to obtain by

legitimate pressure from China all those reasonable facilities which it is as much in her interest to give as in ours to obtain. That is the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and it is one in which we shall not be found wanting.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): The right hon. Gentleman has dealt very fairly with the points raised in this debate. He has shown that desire felt by all of us to deal with the various questions and to explain to the House that the Government are alive to their importance, and desire to do something to procure practical results. I have no complaint to make of the object pursued or with the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with it. Where there is a little difference between us is, not as to the policy to be pursued or as to the energy which should be shown in keeping the objects in the front, but on the practical results that ensue. That was a difference which must have been seen throughout. It is seen that it is difficult to get practical results except on paper, but the knowledge which my hon. friend the Member for Barnsley and the noble Lord opposite have gained, and which they have placed before the House from their own personal experience, must be of value. Both the hon. Members who spoke in this debate dwelt on the decline of British influence at Pekin. I do not go so far as to say that British influence is non-existent—I think that would be overstating the case; but I think it is undoubtedly the fact that British influence has declined as compared with the influence gained by some other Powers, certainly Russia. Undoubtedly the shadow of Russian influence has been deepening over China. Russia has been pressing forward, and has come nearer; her communications are crossing the continent. As to the Russian railways, I think they ought to be studied from a strategical position—from the point of view of Russian political ambition, rather than from the point of view of trade competition. I do not believe that the railway trade across Siberia will ever be able to compete against Great Britain. I do not think goods will ever be carried to China by rail. Therefore the railway is a political matter, and so far Russia has gained. To a certain extent it is inevitable, and I welcome the recognition of the right hon. Gentleman that Russia has a certain sphere of interest in Manchuria with which we should not think of interfering. Our complaint on this side of the House has always been, not that that has come about—because I think it was inevitable—but that a great opportunity was missed of having a good understanding with Russia while it has been coming. There was a moment when Russia's designs had not been fully declared, but when Russia was obliged to show her hand by making representations on the presence of British ships in Port Arthur. Lord Salisbury expressed surprise, and said that the ships would go on in due course; and they did go on; and that incident will remain in our memories as a great landmark of an opportunity lost. It is true that we have had an understanding with Russia since; but it is not as explicit or comprehensive as the understanding which might have been made, quite safely, before the ships were removed. With Lord Salisbury prepared to concede—as he would have been—what Russia wanted, it would have been the obvious occasion to explain that we were not a permanent obstacle to Russia's designs, but that to bring them about must be the result of an understanding with us. That belongs to past history, and I do not wish to dwell upon it; but our treaty rights, on which our position depends, have been by a slow process gradually eaten away—not altogether, but considerably eaten away. On paper we are entitled to much more than our trade secures. I admit that it is not under the present Government alone that this diminution of our treaty rights has been going on. Many of them are old treaties which in practice have been considerably impaired. But in August, 1897, Lord Salisbury wrote a despatch to say that Her Majesty's Government could not support British merchants in claiming any privileges which they had not enjoyed in the past. That has been construed to mean that treaty rights which exist on paper, if they have fallen into desuetude, will not be pressed by the Foreign Office. That is a direct sanction to the doctrine that we have more treaty rights on paper than we mean to enforce. With regard to internal navigation, I would raise the same point—what has been given on paper has not been realised in practice.

It was on March 1, 1898,* not February 25, that Lord Curzon made this statement—

"That the opening of the internal navigation on all rivers in China to British steamers from the ensuing summer means that we shall be able to take British merchandise in British ships, not merely to the ports recognised by Treaty, but to every riverside town and station in the whole of the interior of China."

The right hon. Gentleman met this point very fairly by admitting that in practice great difficulties had been found which prevented this promise being as fully realised as was expected at the time the statement was made. But, of course, he will understand that, when that statement was made by Lord Curzon, there was very great anxiety as to whether we were not being worsted in the contest for commercial supremacy in China, and that statement undoubtedly went far not only in the House, but in the press, to disarm criticism. If it disarmed criticism, and has not been realised since, it is not unnatural that it should be the cause of renewed criticism. As to Wei-hai-wei, we on this side generally deprecated the occupation of Wei-hai-wei, doubting whether any good object would be secured. We were told then that it would not be in any case of commercial value, though it turns out that it is of commercial value. We were told that it was of value as giving moral courage to the Government of Pekin. I cannot say that the evidence of that moral courage has been apparent since the occupation of Wei-hai-wei. I have always been of opinion that for a second naval base we should have been in a stronger position if we had taken some place nearer to the mouth of the Yang-tsze, and what I fear is that the occupation of this second naval station may make us more reluctant, if the time comes, to take a station which may be necessary nearer to the centre of our commercial interests. It is more difficult to take a third base than to take a second. Now I come to the question of concessions. I have great sympathy with a great deal of what the right hon. Gentleman said about that. It is not so long ago that M. Delcassé, speaking in the French Chamber, gave a warning of the same kind—that concessions were being pressed and that advantages were being asked for; and that in some cases it was well to bear in mind that there were parts of China which were conspicuous for their want of resources and the abundance of piracy. I am afraid that concessions have been pressed for which are not in themselves very desirable—which are a "try on," and which have no real backing behind them; and the Government ought not to be open to reproach because in every case it does not lend its influence to support them. I doubt whether at this moment the granting of more concessions will tend to the development of the trade of China. The danger is that they may prevent China from being developed. Given concessions limited in number and backed by capital, they will assist the development of China. But an overgreat number of concessions, of which comparatively few are exploited, is likely to be a drawback. You may have the ground covered by paper concessions which positively block the way. Railway concessions may be obtained through large districts of China by people who may not be prepared to give effect to them; and they will prevent other people from, in the course of time, getting effective concessions. Therefore, I am not anxious to see this competition in concessions carried further; and the want of concessions is not the real obstacle to the development of trade in China. We all feel that there may be an enormous development of trade in China. With the population and resources of the country, its power to enter into exchange of commerce with Europe is far greater than has been realised in practice, though not, perhaps, in imagination. What are the real obstacles? Piracy is one obstacle. Brigands on land appear to be another; and I am not sure that the worst is not the leakage in the *likin* duties. If these could be removed there would be a tremendous expansion of trade between China and foreign nations. But I have no doubt that it is very difficult to effect this. The British Government and others certainly ought to lose no opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Government of Pekin cases of disorder, or breaches of Conventions, or tampering with the *likin* duty. But the difficulty is not to bring these things to the notice of the Government of Pekin, but to get them to give redress; and the problem is how to make China govern itself well, how to introduce Western methods

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. liv., page 335.

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of government into China. Directly any progress is made in that direction, you will have a tremendous expansion of trade; but as long as the Government remains as it is now, however many concessions are granted, it will be impossible for trade to make those leaps and bounds which it could do with greater security. There are three stages in governing well. There is first the desire, second the capacity, and third the habit of governing well. I am afraid that China has not yet the desire to improve the methods of government. If she had, then the advice of the foreign nations might be useful in developing her capacity; and once capacity is developed then the habit will follow. Promises are given about internal navigation, about concessions, and so forth; but the Chinese Government in giving them is not really anxious that the trade of China should be developed; and whatever good intentions there may be seem to get lost in the local officials and the peculiar methods of Chinese government. The local officials take advantage of the weakness of the central Government; and the central Government takes advantage in turn of the divisions between the foreign nations. Sometimes it seems to be the shuttlecock between the diplomatists and the local officials; and I am not sure that it does not appreciate the situation. It is difficult in these circumstances to make progress; and the most satisfactory thing in the Blue-book is that some agreement has been made between the Powers as to a common line of action. I cordially endorse what the right hon. Gentleman said, that we ought to be careful not to be led into any course which would lead to the occupation of territory in China or the employment of troops on land. We must show the utmost energy in pressing things on the Government of Pekin, but we must always look upon those two things as essentially undesirable. I hope that other Powers will feel that. If that is so, more can be done if the Powers themselves concentrate their efforts on what is practicable. If they will concert to use pressure together, then the Yamen may be compelled to go, slowly, in the direction desired. But when one Power pushes by itself in one direction and another Power pushes in another direction, no progress is possible. We are all exceedingly gratified that the United States Government's circular to the Powers has met with a favourable response—certainly from our own Government. The United States for a long time strictly adhered to the principle of not interfering in foreign affairs generally. This circular of the United States is a departure from their old practice, and I think that they are to be congratulated, having thus decided to take the initiative in a question of general policy, that that initiative has been shown in a step of this kind. I hope it will be a cause of some gratification, as the step is one which was well received by the Powers. If the Powers would agree on the "open door" they would be safe as regards themselves. But it is not only the United States which has expressed its strong opinion in this matter, M. Delcassé in the French Chamber said—

"The majority of these enterprises (French) are developed in regions other than those which, if the policy of zones of influence prevailed, might constitute the French zone. Is not this enough to caution us against the onerous vagaries of which I spoke just now, and to induce us, on the contrary, to keep China open to the free conflict of the intelligence and capital of the whole world?"

Our own opinion is declared to the world; and I think it is possible to look on the future commercial development of China with more equanimity than ever before, if foreign nations who are interested determine to preserve the "open door," which is the best guarantee of the integrity of China. I hope they will go a little further, and agree gradually on a little concerted pressure. When breaches of regulations take place, when outrages occur, and difficulties about internal navigation arise, they might use their diplomatic influence all together at Pekin in the same direction. I admit that it is rather difficult to preserve the integrity of a country by a pressure from the outside, but at the same time I am sure that in the long run in dealing with the integrity of China there must be a considerable amount of administrative reform. I hope from what we have seen about the open door there is some prospect that there will be a free interchange of views between the foreign Governments concerned in Chinese trade and affairs, that they will be able to pull together to use all their influence and to exert it together at Pekin, a policy which is necessary to secure the growth of trade and better government in China, and to maintain the integrity of the country.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): With regard to the position to be taken up by the Powers, I think it has been shown that the position of China at the present time is entirely different from that in which it stood when we last discussed the question. We have this declaration of the French Minister, and we have had America declaring that we should, along with other countries, declare that the open door should be maintained throughout China. There are certain things on which the Government ought to be congratulated. The American Ambassador, writing to Lord Salisbury, says he believes it "to be the settled law of this country that no commercial advantage to be gained by us will conflict with the advantage to be gained by other countries." I think that is a point Lord Salisbury is to be congratulated upon. With regard to one point referred to by the hon. Member—the extent of our trade interests in China—I wish to deal with it for a moment, because he took a small view. He said that our trade with China was 3 per cent. of our total foreign trade. It appears to be forgotten, however, that our Empire as a whole is largely interested in the trade of China. The foreign trade of China at the present time amounts to only 2s. per head of the population, but if it is developed to the extent that the trade of Japan is developed, I believe the foreign trade of China will amount to something like two hundred millions per annum, of which sum our Empire will have by far the larger share. Therefore, I am justified in drawing attention to the remark of the hon. Gentleman with respect to the trade with China. It bears, as the hon. Baronet has said, upon the question of the reform of China. I have been one of those who have held that this country has ready at its hand a great duty to perform, and I have used the phrase in connection with it of "Egyptianising China." One does not wish to convey the impression that this country and America have large enterprises for the acquisition of territory in China. A great burden would be laid upon the shoulders of this country if we undertook the reform of all the departments of Chinese administration. The point I wish to deal with to-night is the question of the inland waterways and their development and use by this country. That is directly affected by the reform of the administration of China. The great difficulty with regard to the development of the waterways is that you have two systems of finance in China. You have the provincial finance and the Imperial finance. The Imperial authorities make out the amount required for carrying on the Government, and it sends down requisitions to the provincial authorities, and they have to send enough to Pekin to meet the requirements of the central authority. The House will see that if you propose to introduce a new method in respect of the inland waterways, you run the danger of confusing your inland trade with your maritime trade, and it is the difficulty of distinguishing between the two systems of trade—the danger of their being mixed up—that has led to the opposition of the provincial authorities to the opening up of the inland waterways of China. In dealing with this matter, surely the simplest way of all, now that the Chinese are asking for a revision of the tariff at the treaty ports, would be to come to an arrangement by which the *likin* would be altogether abolished and another tariff introduced at our treaty ports. There is another point that bears on the same question. At the present time there is an enormous leakage in the revenues of China, and a very distinguished authority has pointed out that in the land tax alone there is a leakage of something like fourteen millions per annum. It is not conceivable how that amount disappears, but the figures are given by a distinguished authority, and there can be no doubt that you have an enormous margin to go upon with which you might develop another reform, and that is to undertake the proper payment of the officials throughout the length and breadth of China who are entrusted with the control of the various departments. What is the position of the ordinary official in China? An official has to pay a large sum for his post, and he is not certain how long he will hold it; he has a large crowd of needy relatives who feed upon him, and he must during his term of office do his best to recoup himself for his outlay. Here you have one of the root evils in China. If you had China properly administered, and its finances placed on a sound footing, you would have an ample margin to pay these officials proper salaries, and so deprive them of any excuse for resorting to the system of bleeding the revenue. I want to ask the House, what is there so extravagant

in this country asking, in conjunction with the other Powers, to undertake the reform of these various parts of the administration of China? Would there be anything very serious in retaining the services of some distinguished financier to preside over an Imperial Board of Revenue in Pekin? I cannot, for my own part, see where the extravagance comes in. I think those who have studied the subject must be convinced that one way to keep China upon its legs is to adopt some system of reform such as I have ventured to suggest I do not want to speak strongly upon the methods that have been pursued in the past. I think I have had the honour of saying before what the hon. Baronet said about the treatment of the affair of Port Arthur, and I think it would have been far better if an agreement had been arrived at at the time of a friendly nature. I am bound to say that the Government have undoubtedly done their best to deal in an effective manner with the different matters brought before them, but this is the complaint I should be rather inclined to make. My right hon. friend said that the remedies had been "prompt." That is a word I could not use, because it appears to me throughout the Blue-book that the remedy applied has not been prompt. Take the case of the murder of Mr. Fleming. He was murdered under circumstances of peculiar horror, and it has taken nearly a year to bring the criminal to justice. For a long time this criminal remained near his own home—something like four months—and although during the whole of that time he was known to be there, no attempt was made to arrest him. I take this as an example of the way in which our Government failed to act as promptly as they ought. Through the whole correspondence it appears that you must show an absolutely firm front to the Chinese Government. Supposing you have an official in China of high integrity and capacity, who is convinced that the safety of his country lies in furthering British interests in China, supposing that, in furthering these interests, he incurs the hostility of a neighbouring Power which is able to make its influence felt in various ways, supposing that man has assisted the British Government and British traders in obtaining something they desired to have, and after having done that, he is brought to trial on a charge of having misappropriated funds—supposing all that done, if you find that man dismissed and disgraced, do you think that your Government, by allowing such treatment to take place to a high official of great integrity, is promoting your interests in China? Another example is this. The demand for the cession of Wei-hai-wei was received on a Thursday. It was put before the Yamen on Friday, and I think it was on the following Tuesday that Wei-hai-wei was handed over to this country. That shows you what you can do if you make up your minds to act. I give this illustration as showing my view of the position the Government ought to take up in China.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): When the Under Secretary of State says that it seems to him to be a sufficient answer to the severe condemnation contained in the terms of the notice placed on the Paper that the House was rather empty during the greater part of the evening, I think the House itself will hardly think the emptiness of the House—when there could be no division—is any answer to the charges my hon. friend has brought against the Government. The Under Secretary answered himself also in another phrase of his own speech. He said that the coming on of this subject for discussion had been rather unexpected. The debate to-night has established this fact: that in the opinion of the great majority on both sides of this House who take any interest in Chinese affairs, the weakest point in the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government has been the story of our dealings with China itself, and that was as fully admitted by the hon. Member for Chester as it was in the speech of my hon. friend who so much pleased the House. The Under Secretary has contended that the charges brought against the Government are old and stale, and he challenged Members who entertained doubts with regard to the policy of the Government to quote from the Blue Book any actual instance of the failure of the Government. Let us take one matter which is specially interesting to the commerce of this country—I mean the development of the trade upon the rivers. The hon. Baronet speaking from our front bench declared that that was the main ground for self-praise which the Government selected on previous occasions

in this House. They said, "At all events nothing could be more important for British trade. We have got this understanding for the complete development of the internal navigation of China and British steamers going over the waterways carrying our goods there." The late Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs—Mr. Curzon as he then was—made the statement on three occasions in the strongest note, in a song of triumph as to the policy of the Government in that respect. Everyone who knows anything of the trade of China will recognise the importance of developing the waterways of China. The words Mr. Curzon used in uttering that song of triumph were none too strong if the thing had really been brought about. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Berwick division of Northumberland and the hon. Member who last addressed the House have both alluded to it in general terms. What is the statement made on behalf of the Government by their own agents in the Blue-book itself? There are three passages in communications from Government agents, and one from Sir Robert Hart. They are very short, and I will read them as they stand. In the report on the trade on the West River I find these words—

"Were the inland waters open, and equality of treatment secured to both, a large increase, in which both Chinese and British vessels would participate, would inevitably occur. . . . Under the heading of internal trade comes the crux of the whole failure of the so-called opening of the inland waters."

Acting-Consul Fox, writing from Wuchow on June 9th, 1899, says—

"Foreign steamers on the West River are now, to all intents and purposes, on precisely the same footing as were steamers on the Yang-tsze before the opening of the inland waters of China."

Sir Robert Hart wrote on May 12th, 1899—

"This privilege [the privilege of trading on the inland waterways], whether rightly or wrongly thought valuable, will require years of patient nursing before it can possibly answer any expectations."

This is what has followed the great boast to the House of the success of your policy in China. This was the one thing that you were supposed really to have obtained, and this is the thing I have shown conclusively by the letters of your own agents these you have altogether failed to secure. I have only one other thing to say in regard to what fell from the hon. Member for Chester in the last part of his speech. The note of hope that he struck in the last words of his speech concerned the action of the United States. That action has been minimised by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He has twice spoken of it as if it had to do only with the open door. As I read the despatch of the United States, and as it has been understood in the United States, the open door is not the main point of United States policy in China. They put before the open door in writing to us the policy of promoting reforms in China. The Under Secretary of State altogether minimised the new departure in the policy of the United States. He puts forward the open door as the main portion of their policy, while the main portion of their policy as regards China is to develop China on the lines of the reformed Government, which is the first point referred to in the despatch. It was quite clear in what the hon. Member said about Egyptianising China that he did not mean we were to undertake that work ourselves. I am quite sure he was alluding only to European control in reforming the Government, and not to the undertaking of that work by any single Power. We should not minimise this new departure on the part of the United States as if it referred to the open door alone. As I understand the dispatch of the United States, what we are asked to do is to co-operate with the United States in this policy of developing China. The United States asked for united action

"to promote the administrative reform so greatly needed for strengthening the Imperial Government and maintaining the integrity of China, in which the whole Western world is alike concerned."

That is the main point of the American policy The open door only follows incidentally, as it were, from it. My hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley division, is not, I think, open to the charge made against him to-night of desiring that we by ourselves should undertake the reform of the Government of China, because he wishes us frankly to accept the American invitation with more exact knowledge of what it really means than the Government seem to possess. They have assented to it, but with special reference to the open door, and it was to that alone the Under Secretary for Foreign

Affairs devoted his speech to-night. The hon. Member for Chester referred to the forcible upsetting of the reform movement. Of course, we cannot expect the Government to know things they have not yet heard, but there are weighty reasons for believing that one of the leading reformers - - Kung-ya-wei — has been kidnapped and carried off from British territory. It was long since known that this reformer had a price set on his head, and that a sum of 100,000 dols. had been offered for him dead or alive. He fled to British Columbia and returned to Hong Kong, where he was living under police protection, the police occupying the house in which he dwelt. If he has been kidnapped after this price had been set on his head, not only should prompt action be taken by this country, but it seems to me it might form an occasion in which we might properly ask the United States, in support of their own policy, to co-operate with us in any measures which it may be necessary to take. They are desirous of reform, and we are told that a would-be reformer has been carried off from a British colony. If that proves to be true it may provide a leverage for that joint action by the United States and ourselves which we should all like to see at the present moment.

*MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): The right hon. Baronet has indicated that the gist of the United States despatch refers to the strengthening of the Imperial Government of China, and the maintenance of the integrity of China. But to me this passage seems only the exordium of the despatch. The real gravamen is contained under headings one, two, and three, on which the United States Government desires from Her Majesty's Government a declaration, and in them there is nothing about strengthening the Imperial Government.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It believes such a result may be greatly aided and advanced by the declaration.

*MR. MALCOLM: Although the right hon. Baronet has great experience of despatches I think the greatest stress is laid on headings one, two, and three. I think we may congratulate Her Majesty's Government, that so little is now heard in the country about China, and that the House is almost empty now when the question is being discussed. A year or two ago when the question was raised the House was always full, and we had what is called a full dress debate. Now there is no outcry, and I find myself in almost complete accord with my hon. friend the Member for Chester, who has been one of the most acute critics of the Government with reference to Chinese questions. I think the hon. Baronet the Member for the Berwick Division of Northumberland has put his finger on the chief difficulty of doing anything with the Government of China. In his observations on the philosophy of government he said they had neither the desire not the capacity for reform. I think there is a great danger in the House—which has been illustrated to some extent by the speech of the hon. Member for the Barnsley Division—of considering the Chinese question as rather a parochial question, as if this country by a *sic volo, sic jubeo* attitude could do whatever it liked with an enormous empire like that of China. Therefore I think that his observations that "we will stand no nonsense" about one thing and "insist" on something else, are completely out of place, because in my opinion we have absolutely no power to enforce such threats upon the Government of China. The hon. Member also said that he at last had come to the conclusion that owing to some Government management or mismanagement in this country, we had begun to treat the North China question not as a sea question, but as a land question. I have always thought that this problem of North China lay in a land question, not in a sea question. I have always felt, as the noble Lord said to-night, that we lay too much stress on the question of the cession of Port Arthur, and, if anything, not enough of stress on the action going on along the boundary between the south of the Russian dominions and Northern China. I have means of knowing from those who have travelled along that boundary that there are Russian camps along the whole distance within the boundary of China - not military camps, it is true, but trading camps, which get into the confidence of the Chinese, which lend them money, and which are preparing the way, no doubt, for the possible annexation of Northern China. Yet, upon the whole, I agree with the noble Lord who said to-night that we ought not to pay

so much attention to Northern China, but ought to confine our energies and attention to the Yang-tsze valley, which he said we should take within our sphere of influence. But I do not agree with him when he diminishes altogether the importance of our possession of Wei-hai-wei. It is possible that Wei-hai-wei is not the strategic base it was supposed to be, or that it does not possess the commercial advantages it was supposed to have, but at the time that possession was secured it was absolutely necessary that some make-weight should be obtained by England as against the acquisitions of Russia and Germany; and I do not know what better we could have done at that time than to secure Wei-hai-wei as a make-weight, and what better we can do now than improve it as a port under the direction of the Admiralty. The hon. Member for the Barnsley Division also referred to the question of the Yang-tsze valley. I am not sure he did not use the phrase "Yang-tsze myth," but he rather set on one side the value of our concessions in the Yang-tsze valley.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: We have no concessions.

*MR. MALCOLM: That is a point to be subsequently discussed. It seems to me we have the Yang-tsze valley as a sphere of influence as against Russian influence in Northern China. If we advocate the confinement of our energies to the Yang-tsze valley, what we mean is, not that we are going to lose sight of British interests in other parts of China, but that we are prepared to concentrate our pressure in that particular portion of China.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: May I correct the hon. Gentleman? I did not speak of the Yang-tsze valley as a myth. What I said was that any agreement between the British and Chinese Governments giving us any priority of right in the Yang-tsze valley was a myth.

*MR. MALCOLM: Many hon. Members appear inclined to consider anything this country has got as a paper concession, and that everything other nations get is of very material importance. I consider myself that the Government have absolutely nothing to be blamed for in this matter. They have not been behind other Governments. They have the interests of their country at heart, and are doing their work in as statesmanlike a way as other countries are doing their work. It does seem to me, noticing as I do in this House and in the country an utter absence of the excitement which prevailed a year or two ago with reference to the Chinese question, that the obvious deduction is that we are all infinitely more satisfied now than we were before with the action of the Government with regard to the Chinese question, and that we all observe the material concessions made to this country through the statesmanship of the Government by the Government of the Empire of China.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I think the Government are to be congratulated upon the firmness with which they appear to stand by the opinion that we should not incur territorial responsibilities in China. I only wish that that opinion had prevailed sooner, and that we had not increased our land responsibilities by taking Wei-hai-wei with a land frontier. I cannot but think that debates in this House on the question of China are very like getting up a discussion on the 8th or 9th chapter of a book without having read the previous chapters. It is said that this Government lost this chance or that, as if these matters were quite modern history. My own opinion is that the real chance this country lost was in 1855–6. The Crimean War is the original cause of Russia being at Port Arthur to-day. It was magnificent strategy of Russia, and it was our own want of information and our failure in military and naval action in the North Pacific that gave Russia the first grip on the sea coast. It was wonderful strategy on the part of Russia, and we then lost our chance of effective interference to stop the growth of Russian interference at Pekin which was inevitable when Russia got to the sea with a long frontier behind. My own belief is that the Government are taking a wise step in doing what is practicable in concert with other Powers to deal with China through her waterways, and in no other way whatever. Even granted that the British and United States Governments and all the Powers in Europe combine, I believe when young men now in this House are old that the Treasury Bench will still be charged with

not having sufficiently accelerated matters in China because any process of improvement must be of very long duration, so great is the inertia of the vast mass of human beings who inhabit the country.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[The LORD ADVOCATE, (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

CLASS I.

1. £29,000, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces and Marlborough House.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said the First Commissioner of Works would recollect that on a former occasion he referred to a certain collection of paintings and other articles, the property of the nation, which was in Buckingham Palace. As the matter had been already discussed he did not desire another discussion, but he thought it was important that the Vote should not be taken without reference to the subject, as in that way a reform might in years be brought about. The paintings referred to were left by one of the Georges to the nation, and not to the Crown personally. They were very historic and valuable, and the question arose whether they ought not to be removed to some place where the public might view them, or, if that were not possible, whether some portions of Buckingham Palace should not be thrown open a little more often to the public. Royal Palaces on the Continent were much more open to the public. Even Windsor Castle was thrown open at certain times, and it seemed strange that the public should be excluded from Buckingham Palace, which was less in the personal occupation of the Crown than any of the other Royal Palaces.

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) succeeded Mr. A. Graham Murray in the Chair.]

MR. CALDWELL: It was remarkable that as regarded Palaces occupied by the Crown there was no difficulty in the way of the public getting access to them at certain convenient times, whereas the public were excluded from Buckingham Palace in the interests of minor people. He did not think the Crown had any wish to exclude the public from Buckingham Palace, and that must be the act of some minor officials. It was quite true that the First Commissioner of Works expressed himself clearly on the subject last year, but another year had since elapsed, and he hoped there would be a change of opinion, and that Buckingham Palace would be thrown open to the public at certain times. If not, then the collection to which he had referred, and which was the property of the nation, should be removed to some building where the public could view it. He noticed that the installation of electric light in Buckingham Palace had cost £11,000, and that was an additional reason why the Palace should be thrown open to the public. With regard to the installation of electric light at Windsor Castle £2,000 was taken on account, and he would be glad if the First Commissioner of Works would state how much was to be expended altogether. There was hardly anything at all for repairs to Holyrood Castle. It had the disadvantage that the Queen only went there occasionally, but the building required that money should be spent on it to keep it in decent repair, especially when so much was spent on the Royal Palaces in England.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The hon. Member has again raised the question of the opening of Buckingham Palace to the public, but I am afraid I have no other answer to give him than that which it was my duty to give on several previous occasions. I would point out to the hon. Member that Buckingham Palace is on rather a different footing to other Palaces. Although Her Majesty does not occupy it to any very large extent, it is after all the town house of Her Majesty and her family, and I can assure the hon. Member that there are very few weeks in which it is not occupied either by members of Her Majesty's family or Her Majesty's visitors. I do not think that Her Majesty can be accused of any want of consideration or selfishness in the way in which

she throws the Royal Palaces not in Her Majesty's occupation open to the public. I may illustrate my argument by reminding the Committee that within the last two years Her Majesty has allowed Kensington Palace to be opened to the public, and further, has thrown the grounds attached to the Royal Palace at Kew into Kew Gardens. I am afraid I cannot hold out any hope that so far as Buckingham Palace is concerned it will be thrown open to the public. The hon. Member also referred to the electric lighting installation at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle. The safety of Buckingham Palace was recently considered by a Committee, and it was reported that it was in an extremely unsatisfactory condition, and the committee recommended that it should be lighted with electricity. With regard to Holyrood Palace, we have not spent as much money there as I should like to have seen expended, but I sincerely hope that this year I shall be able to spend more upon that palace, and reduce the inequality which exists. The hon. Member will bear with me, I think, when I remind him of the very great expenditure we have had to incur this year with regard to national matters, and when I say that this is not a year in which I could successfully or fairly approach the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a large sum of money for this purpose. I will bear in mind the suggestions of the hon. Gentleman opposite, and if during the year I should feel myself justified in approaching the Treasury with regard to further expenditure on Holyrood Palace, I will do so.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked the First Commissioner of Works if some of the pictures and art treasures at Buckingham Palace could be transferred for a time to Holyrood Palace. He was glad that the renovation of the tapestries at Holyrood Palace was proceeding, and he wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee any idea when they would be completed, and if it was possible to increase the staff of girls engaged on that work. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman was going to try to get more money for Holyrood Palace, which was one of the most neglected of all the palaces.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he desired to ask a question in regard to an item for fuel, light, water, and household articles supplied at the Royal residences. He wished to know if when they gave an eminent person a free residence, they provided him with household articles, such as coal scuttles and slop pails. He had been told that the First Commissioner of Works kept a kind of chandler's shop to supply these goods to such people. He did not think this kind of thing was ever intended, and anybody who had a small house like Pembroke Lodge rent free, and enjoyed a great many other advantages, should not come upon the State for fuel, light, and household expenses. It was not right that the State should buy these small articles for these people, and he should like a little explanation as to what those household articles were, and whether they could not be reduced.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I entirely agree with the gist of the remarks of the hon. Member who has just sat down. There is no fuel or light supplied free to any of the residences he has mentioned. The only charge is one of £25 for Pembroke Lodge, and that is in regard to the water supply. In all cases where residences are lent by Her Majesty they pay the whole of such charges. Certainly if the occupants of these houses live rent free by Her Majesty's favour, they ought not to receive such perquisites.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I wish to call the attention of the First Commissioner of Works to the road from Pall Mall to the entrance to Buckingham Palace. Last year I defended what was considered to be an extravagance, but I am glad to see now that the road has been completed. The right hon. Gentleman will observe that in front of the stables at Buckingham Palace the paving of the crossing places and road is not in that good condition which it ought to be, and I would suggest that he should write a letter to the surveyors of the parishes concerned, asking the local authorities to put those roads in a proper condition.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I may point out to the hon. Member that that question does not arise under this Vote. I may, however, thank him for his suggestion, and I will see what can be done to carry it out.

*MR. WEIR: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my points.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I did not mean any discourtesy to the hon. Member, but I thought I had answered his points when I replied to the hon. Member for Mid Lanark. With regard to the pictures and art gems at Buckingham Palace being transferred to Holyrood Palace, that is not a matter with which I have to deal. I think, however, that we should be very thankful to Her Majesty for allowing so many of the Royal Palaces which are in her occupation for life to be thrown open to the public. With regard to Holyrood Palace, I agree that the amount spent there is somewhat out of proportion to the expenditure upon the palaces in London. In regard to the tapestries, I will take care that no delay occurs, and if a larger number of hands can be employed, that shall be done if it is possible with the amount of money at my disposal.

MR. CALDWELL thanked the right hon. Gentleman for meeting the suggestions which had been made, and he had no doubt that he would carry out his promises. He desired, however, to point out that the public did not get as many facilities for visiting Buckingham Palace as they did of visiting Windsor Palace. There were some very valuable pictures and art gems at Buckingham Palace which they were not permitted to see, and as Buckingham Palace was closed so much to the public he thought it would be a good thing if those pictures and art gems were sent for a time to Holyrood Palace.

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £73,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he desired to ask a question upon a matter about which there seemed to him considerable doubt. On page 11 there was an item, "Appropriations in Aid" for key subscriptions amounting to £696. He believed those were subscriptions to public parks set apart for private use. He understood that this sum represented the sale to private individuals of private privileges in public pieces of ground. He thought all public parks and pleasure-grounds for which they were asked to vote money should be devoted to the public. He did not think the First Commissioner of Works should set aside any portion of those grounds exclusively for the use of private persons. He thought the appropriations in aid were altogether wrong and improper. He did not propose to move a reduction, because he believed it would be ruled out of order. His opinion was that it ought not to be there, and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman for an explanation of it. He proposed to move to diminish the amount of these appropriations.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would not be in order in proposing the reduction alluded to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that his motion would leave the amount of the Vote exactly as it was now.

THE CHAIRMAN: It would not be in order.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The amount voted will not be increased or diminished by one farthing by my motion, and the sum would be voted whether the appropriation is there or not.

MR. CALDWELL said there was always a way of getting out of the difficulty, for they could move a reduction at any time or for any reason. There were certain privileges which had been given to certain people which, he thought, ought not to have been given, and, therefore, they could move a reduction on that ground. They were quite entitled to say that they declined to allow this sum of money to be voted for the public parks, for which special privileges were given to private persons. He contended that a motion for the reduction of the Vote would be a perfectly competent proposition, on the general ground that the parks had not been used for the public generally.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said what he suggested was not a reduction of the

Vote by £100, but simply that the appropriation should be diminished, which would leave the Vote unchanged.

MR. CALDWELL held that according to the rules of the House if they wanted an increase in the Vote the only way to do it was to move a reduction, which was the only way of testing it. [Laughter.] There was no more absurdity in moving a reduction when they wished the Vote to remain as it was than in moving a reduction when they wished it to be increased. To put the matter in order he would move that the Vote be reduced by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £72,900, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: These subscriptions only amount to something like £400. They are in respect of Hamilton Place Gardens and some private enclosures in Regent's Park, but they only amount to a small sum. My hon. friend himself has enjoyed these gardens, and I would ask under these circumstances whether he regards their use as an exclusive privilege. I do not think that any general case has been made out in favour of doing away with all these keys at once, but I will undertake to look into the matter and see if any of them can be foregone.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Would the right hon. Gentleman tell the Committee how many of these places there are?

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I think only two, but I will inquire and inform the Committee on the Report stage, or communicate with my hon. friend privately.

MR. JOHN BURNS: After the conciliatory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I would appeal to my hon. friend not to divide on this question; but I wish to emphasise the point raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn, that these subscriptions are not for admissions from private gardens only into public parks but for private entries into public parks maintained out of the public funds. That happens in Hamilton Place Gardens and other parts adjoining Regent's Park, and the general public think that these persons should not get the exclusive right of user of any part of Regent's Park, and when these key tenancies terminate I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider the advisability of not renewing them. I am very glad to hear that there will presently be an opportunity for exercising his discretion in connection with Regent's Park. May I suggest to him that he should adopt the policy of the County Council, who make a considerable revenue from people with premises abutting on open spaces by charging a key fee of 7s. 6d., though they have only the same right of user as the public. In Regent's Park many people pay two or three guineas a year for an advantage worth £200 or £300, because of the magnificent gardens placed at their disposal. The people outside that ring strongly oppose the arrangement, and I think the gardens should be thrown open to the general public.

MR W. A. McARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell): I should like to ask a question—I admit, out of mere personal curiosity. How is it that the inhabitants of Hamilton Place Gardens are the happy possessors of keys at all?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I explain that. I paid three guineas for my key. It was not a gift at all, and I gave it up.

MR. W. A. McARTHUR: I should like to ask how this particular part of the park was set apart for people who paid for their keys; and also whether there is any foundation for the statement that a payment of three guineas a year constitutes a kind of perpetual right to this part of the park. As I understand, there is no right beyond the year for which the subscription is paid, and I hope that next year the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to make an arrangement whereby this portion of the park will be put in the same position as the rest of the park for public use and enjoyment.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The fee simply covers the year for which it is paid.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. WEIR: I wish to call attention to the insufficient number of seats in Kew Gardens, and to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can see his way to provide better seating accommodation there.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: That question will be considered.

MR. CALDWELL: A large sum is paid every year out of Imperial funds for the up-keep of parks in London which, practically, ought to be kept up by the inhabitants of London themselves. The property of these parks belongs to the Crown, but the people use them in the same way as the people in the provinces use their parks, which they not only have to keep up, but have to purchase in the first instance. I do not think it fair that the London parks should be kept up out of Imperial funds; if the people of London want them let them keep them up at their own expense. It may be said that people from the provinces use them, but if people from London go to the provinces or to Paris they get the use of the parks there. There is no argument therefore in the statement that because it is London the parks should be maintained at the national expense. The buildings around these parks increase enormously in value because of their proximity to the parks, and London benefits by the enhanced valuation of these buildings. People in the provinces have reason to complain, and I never could understand why London should be treated differently in the matter of parks from the provinces.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman to kindly explain why cyclists are not allowed to use the roads in Kew Gardens under well-defined conditions. It is a favourite resort for cyclists, and it would be a luxury if they were allowed to ride through the Gardens.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that Kew Gardens are not a park, and I do not think it would be at all convenient, even if within statute, that cyclists should be allowed to use the footpaths in Kew Gardens any more than the footpaths outside Kew Gardens. The value of Kew Gardens is, I have reason to hope, chiefly for students, and they are not regarded as a public park. I may mention that recently I caused better arrangements to be made for cycles at the entrance to Kew Gardens.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I observe there is another appropriation in aid—£217—which I believe is mainly derived from fees on presents of venison. That seems to me not creditable to the State. Certain judges and other officials receive every year a quarter or a haunch of venison which is considered a very graceful and handsome present. It appears, however, that while giving this present with one hand you take a fee from the recipient with the other. I should like to know what is the value of the venison. When any friend of mine sends me a present of venison, I get rid of it as quickly as I can, and I have strong doubts whether the venison presented is worth the £217 in fees which is received for it. This question of fees is one that requires a general looking over. I understand that many persons who have been offered peerages have refused them because of the fees. When the Sovereign sends a man a present of venison he cannot send it back and say he does not want it; but if he takes it he must pay the fee. That is not in the least creditable, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to give us an assurance that he will abolish the practice of giving away venison altogether, or else abolish the fees.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS said that the fees referred to were merely nominal, and that several other amounts were included in the £217 mentioned.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Chief Commissioner of Works, like his predecessor, has given privileges to athletic clubs in the neighbourhood of Kew Gardens which are very beneficial to them. But if these clubs are given grounds they ought not be allowed to display ugly and very vulgar advertisements above their scoring boards. I would suggest that where clubs are given such a favour they should not be permitted to allow a local tradesman—not of English origin either—to put up one of

the most vulgar advertisements I have ever seen.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Houses of Parliament Buildings."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I wish to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to an old historic friend of his about whom he has not quite satisfied me. I refer to our late lamented friend Oliver Cromwell. I want to know whether he has changed his mind about the Cromwell statue. If a statue to Cromwell is, despite the resolutions of both Houses of Parliament, to be placed within the precincts of Parliament, and if money is to be spent on it, what is to prevent a more progressive First Commissioner of Works in the future erecting a counter attraction by putting up a statue to Hooley and his communion plate? He has as little to do with the House of Commons as a Parliamentary institution as had Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell defamed Parliamentary institutions, and Hooley endeavoured to defame them by becoming a Tory candidate. I object on Irish grounds to a statue to a polluted murderer, and I object on English grounds because Cromwell was the *ne plus ultra* of an English adventurer. He began life by endeavouring to disestablish the Church, and he succeeded. Then he allied himself with the aristocracy, instituted a very severe administration in England, and talked scornfully of his Radical days. He was distinctly a family man, and he put into every place his own relatives and creatures. I do not like Cromwellians of that kind. He was a cowardly and vindictive murderer; he was dead to every principle of humanity, and to have a statue to him in the precincts of Parliament is an insult to Englishmen, and a very gross insult to Irishmen. I will protest against it in season and out of season. I am sorry the First Commissioner of Works is turning a deaf ear to my eloquence, because I am about to appeal to his artistic sense against this wretched statue. I know the right hon. Gentleman is not very famous for his artistic tastes. I have known him since his Oxford days—I will not say how long ago—and candour compels me to say that at the same time the Committee should hear what he thinks of this statue, morally and politically. I saw him myself go into the lobby against it. Why then should he erect the statue? Was it because it was given by Lord Rosebery that the right hon. Gentleman was unable to put the unclean thing out of sight? Is it that the Government are afraid of Lord Rosebery, the great Imperialist, and must accept his gift even if it defiles the Palace of Westminster? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division would give us his views as a representative of Birmingham. I am a good man struggling with adversity; I am the voice of one crying in a stock-jobbing wilderness. The statue is to the Irish Members an emblem of insult. It shows the amazing want of sensibility of the English race that, although they compel us to come to this Parliament, they presume to insult us.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress: to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 2nd April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Hamilton Burgh.
Redhill Gas.
Grantham Gas.

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—

Bray Urban District Council.

The same were ordered to lie on Table.

EXMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

MOUNTAIN ASH WATER BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

BURNLEY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

COLONIAL BANK BILL

Reported without Amendment.

COWES PIER BILL [H.L.].

SOUTHAMPTON HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

GREAT BERKHAMPSTEAD WATER BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [H.L.].

BARRY RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

CLEETHORPES GAS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY BOARD BILL [H.H.].

Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

SCOTTISH AMERICAN INVESTMENT COMPANY, LIMITED, BILL [H.L.].

Standing Order No. 91 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to the said Bill; and Bill read 2ª.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE BILL.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

SPALDING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (WATER) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

DEARNE VALLEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.]

NEATH HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS BILL [H.L.].

RHYMNEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

CORK ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

SOUTH ESSEX WATER BOARD BILL [H.L.].

SOUTH ESSEX WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.—

E. Lauderdale (*Chairman*),
E. Carnwath,
L. Barnard,
L. Sudley (*E. Arran*),
L. Farquhar;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Wednesday the 2nd of May next, at

eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2393. France (Trade of La Rochelle and District for the year 1899).

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Forty-seventh Report of the Charity Commissioners.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliaments chargeable on the revenues of India outstanding at the commencement of the half year ended on the 31st March, 1900, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, etc.; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

EDUCATION (REVISED CODE).

Petition for postponement of the proposals recommended with regard to the assessment of the grants; of the Barrow-in-Furness School Board; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN: My Lords, this is practically the Bill which I introduced last year, and which, after some discussion, passed the Second Reading and through Committee of the whole House, with the exception that in its present form it gives effect to some suggestions made by, amongst others, the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The object of the Bill is to check, by making them criminal, a large number of inequitable and illegal secret payments. I do not propose, at this stage, to do more than formally move the Second Reading.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª. —(*Lord Russell of Killowen.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I am sure none of us have any doubt that the object aimed at by this Bill is one which all must desire to see attained. The difficulty in such legislation, however, has always been that you might either do too much or too little. But if the noble and learned Lord should succeed in carrying the present Bill, he will suppress a practice which we must all recognise is injurious to society and the State, and he will be entitled to the gratitude of the country. So far as I am concerned, I will do all I can to help the noble and learned Lord in the matter, and I earnestly hope that he may succeed in solving a problem which, for many years, has sought a solution, but has never yet found it.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, although this Bill will, I am sure, pass with unanimity in your Lordships' House, I wish to say a few words in support of it. Some twenty-five years ago, in conjunction with the late Mr. Russell Gurney, I tried my hand at a Bill for the purpose of stopping the practice of giving illicit commissions. I must confess that our efforts were not successful, for it was pointed out to us that we had framed our Bill in such a way that anyone who gave a small sum to a railway porter was liable to imprisonment. I am pleased to observe that my noble and learned friend the Lord Chief Justice has surmounted those difficulties, and it seems to me that the Bill as framed will be sufficient and efficient for the purpose aimed at. Though my noble and learned friend, on the introduction of the Bill last year, made a full statement of the evils he sought to deal with, I am not quite sure that even now your Lordships, and, still less, the public, are aware of the great extent to which this evil system has been carried, or of its far-reaching effects. Some years ago a suit was instituted before the late Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel, by a large firm of merchants at Bombay, who com-

plained that their shipping agent in Lancashire had systematically charged them with a very large amount of commission which he had no right to charge. The merchants, for instance, would order certain printed calico. The white calico had to be bought, bleached, dyed, printed, packed in boxes, and shipped, and in every one of those processes, representing so many trades, the commission agent had received two invoices, one for the merchant abroad and the other, the real invoice, for the commission agent; and investigation showed that the transactions were so conducted as to make, in respect of one process, a difference of 70 per cent. in favour of the commission agent. With good consistency the commission agent also charged commission on the sum he had pocketed. In the course of the hearing Sir George Jessel inquired of the eminent counsel who appeared for the commission agent what was the answer to the charge; and the reply was that the practice was universal throughout the whole shipping trade in Lancashire, and was prevalent elsewhere. Sir George Jessel asked, "Are you about to prove that?" and counsel replied, "Yes, I have a mass of evidence. There are a large number of most respectable people in court to give evidence in proof that the practice is universal." Sir George Jessel said, "You can send those respectable people home; they have come to prove an iniquitous practice, and the sooner they leave the court the better." Judgment went in favour of the firm of merchants, but I have no doubt the practice was universal. There was another case in connection with a very large industrial and manufacturing business in the Midland counties, in which the cashier was charged with the embezzlement of several thousands of pounds. He admitted that he had not accounted for the money, but pleaded he had paid it away in commissions on behalf of the firm. When this was mentioned to the directors, who were prosecuting, they said it was nonsense, and that they had already allowed for the commissions. Books were produced showing that thousands upon thousands a year were paid away in commissions, and it was stated that the firm could seldom get contracts and could never secure the passing of their goods unless they paid these commissions to the people behind the scenes. This surely is a matter of great importance. The evil of the system is not only that the money goes out of the pockets of persons who ought not to pay it into the pockets of those who ought not to receive it. That is not the extent of the evil. The whole practice is demoralising, and one of the consequences is that the person purchasing generally gets an inferior article. I will give your Lordships a concrete case. A submarine cable had to be laid. Tenders were advertised for, obtained, and opened, and the contractors whose tender was about to be accepted, and the amount of whose tender approximated to the real value of a good cable which would answer the requirements contained in the advertisement, were told by those behind the scenes that before the contract would be given to them they would have to pay commission amounting to some £100,000. What was the result? The contracting company were compelled to consider their shareholders. They could not make a profit if they paid this large sum of money in commissions, and so were compelled to deliver an inferior cable, which, in the course of a few months, frayed away, and when lifted was found to be so badly constructed that it could not properly be repaired, and the whole of the £600,000 which had been spent upon the undertaking was entirely lost. Surely evils like these are worthy of the attention of the Legislature. I do not know anyone more capable of dealing with this phase of commercial dishonesty than one who administers justice, and who constantly sees the evils that arise from the system. I sincerely congratulate the noble and learned Lord, the Lord Chief Justice, on the introduction of this Bill, and I trust that with the good aid of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack he may be able to carry into law this measure, which will tend to the destruction of an evil and disgraceful system.

*LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN: My Lords, I am glad that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack and the noble and learned Lord who has just addressed the House find themselves able to give such cordial support to this Bill. The evils of the system of illicit secret commissions have been pointed out so frequently that I do not propose to trouble your Lordships now with any observations upon them. The matter could not have been more pithily stated than it was some time ago in the columns

of *The Times* newspaper. *The Times* published an article in reference to the correspondence on the matter which had appeared in its columns, in the course of which it said—

"First came solicitors accused of betraying the trust of their employers, and leaguing with third parties to divide fees to which they had no sort of just claim. Then followed bankers, auctioneers, architects, insurance agents, and accountants. There does not seem, in short, to be any end to the ramification of this canker, which has grown to such a height as to threaten the extinction of honest plain-dealing altogether. It may be traced, indeed, through a much wider ramification than the correspondence we have published has as yet disclosed, and through all shades of questionableness, from direct bribery of the most corrupt kind, such as that of the architect or engineer who receives douceurs from the contractors and tradesmen whom he is bound to overlook, to the more venial, but still not justifiable, gifts or 'discounts' or 'half commissions' which nominally unpaid agents, such as bankers, may receive from a broker."

I am glad to be able to say that the public discussion of this question has already worked for the public advantage. I have received a great many communications from firms, notably from some in the printing trade, which was the theatre of some of the most pernicious of these practices, to the effect that they are binding themselves together so as by co-operation on their part to do away with the system. This Bill comes before your Lordships and before the public under circumstances which I venture to think are unique. It has been circulated more widely and has received a larger amount of what I may call representative support than any Bill I know of. I will only trouble your Lordships with two or three of the more important instances. The Association of Trade Protection Societies, representing seventy-four societies and comprising 34,000 members, passed a resolution unanimously expressing—

"the necessity for a great effort being made to attack, expose, and eradicate the pernicious system of illicit secret commissions."

Another even more important resolution is the one passed by the Congress of Co-operative Societies, including a membership of one million and a half, representing a capital exceeding £20,000,000, and with a yearly turn-over in trade of nearly £70,000,000. The resolution was as follows—

"That this Congress expresses its strong approval of the principle of the Bill promoted by the Lord Chief Justice with the object of bringing the practice of giving and taking secret and illicit commissions in trade and commerce under the Criminal Law, believing that such practices are seriously demoralising to individual character, injurious to industrial and commercial enterprise of every kind, and especially destructive and harmful to all forms of co-operation and to municipal and public bodies generally, and we trust that the means of putting the principle of the Bill in operation will be unrestricted."

A similar resolution was passed by the Manchester Society of Chartered Accountants and by a public meeting held in Birmingham to consider the Bill; and those resolutions were passed not upon the general principle of the measure, but after they had had the opportunity of seeing and fully considering the Bill itself. The Association of Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, representing ninety-three Chambers of Commerce, passed the following resolution during the last month—

"That this Association approves in principle of the Prevention of Corruption Bill introduced in the Session of 1899 by Lord Russell of Killowen, and trusts that, with such amendments as may be necessary on points of detail, the measure may pass into law during the present session."

Only this morning, as I was coming down to your Lordships' House, I received a letter from a gentleman who does not wish his name to be made public, but whom I personally know, which I think is worth reading to your Lordships because it justifies the remark of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack that the ramifications of this system are almost infinite. My correspondent is in a large way of business as a carriage maker and seller, and is also a large buyer of horses. He writes—

"The custom of coachbuilders giving commissions to the servants of their customers is universal, and I know of no exceptions. The rate varies from 2½ to 5 per cent. on new carriages, and as much as 10 per cent. on repairs. It would be impossible for a coachbuilder to continue his business in the present state of the law if he did not give commissions, owing to the fact that carriages require extraordinary care taken of them in the way of washing off the mud, etc., and if a coachman did not receive his commission he would not take that extra care of his carriage, and in six months the carriage would have suffered very greatly, and yet nothing could be proved against the coachman. The result would be a customer would have a damaged carriage and the coachbuilder's reputation would have suffered. With regard to horses, I have bought several hundreds and know something of the trade, and it is the usual practice for the coachman to receive 'the shillings' (as the

shilling in each guinea is called in the trade), and though I think in many cases the coachman does not ask for it, it is hard for him to refuse if the dealer offers it on condition of his master buying the horse. In the building trade commissions are paid to servants for repairs and decorations to houses, but not on a serious scale. It is within my own knowledge that the general practice amongst provision dealers is to give commissions to the servants; and I know of a cook who was approached by a provision dealer with a bribe to actually spoil in the cooking the provisions supplied by a rival firm, and when the cook refused she was approached a second time, and then she informed her master of the circumstances.'

I hope I shall have the benefit of the advice of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack as to the best way of dealing with this Bill, in order to secure its passing into law at as early a period as possible.

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order).

*LORD WINDSOR: In consequence of the insertion of Clause 4 in the Standing Committee the Irish Office have drawn my attention to a consequential Amendment. The Libraries Offences Act, 1898, does not apply to Ireland, and therefore it will be necessary to move an Amendment in Clause 11. I will submit that Amendment on the Third Reading.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS): I have to say, on behalf of the Local Government Board, that they entirely accept the Bill as it stands.

Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five of the clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 2nd April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) BILL (STANDING ORDER COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills pursuant to the Order of the House of the 29th day of March, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Land Registry (New Buildings) Bill.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—

Government Stock and other Securities Investment Company Bill [Lords].
Newport (Monmouthshire) Gas Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.
Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.
Local Government Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

Bray Urban District Council.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

CHESHIRE LINES COMMITTEE BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE WATER BILL.

SPALDING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (WATER) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

GREAT YARMOUTH PORT AND HAVEN BILL.

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

READING CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL.

SOUTHPORT WATER BILL.

WIDNES AND RUNCORN BRIDGE BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

DONEGAL RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

DUNDEE HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

LANCASHIRE INEBRIATES ACTS BOARD BILL [Lords].

MENSTONE WATER (TRANSFER) BILL [Lords].

OTLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL WATER BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Dewsbury, Llandudno, Macclesfield, Manchester, Newton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Dewsbury, Llandudno, Macclesfield, Manchester, Newton-in-Makerfield, Wigan," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 164.]

BRADFORD CORPORATION BILL.

Ordered, that the Minutes of Evidence taken on the Bradford Water and Improvement Bill, in Session 1881, the Pudsey Gas Bill, in Session 1887, and the Bradford Tramways and Improvement Bill, in Session 1899, be referred to the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.]

HARBOUR, &c., BILLS.

Copy ordered, "of the Report of the Board of Trade on the North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

EXETER CORPORATION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Military Lands Provisional Order Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Commissioners of the burgh of Motherwell to provide an additional water supply to the burgh; and to make and maintain new and additional waterworks; and for other purposes." Motherwell Water Bill [Lords].

MOTHERWELL WATER BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Dingwall; Chirnside; Nairn; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Chiswick; and Northfleet; to lie upon the Table.

MIDWIVES BILL.

Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Swindon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Gateshead; J. Wallace Hood, junior, and others; Keighley; Glasgow; North Road; Chester le Street; Wrexham; Lincoln; Tynemouth; Pendleton; Exeter; Bacup; Newcastle-on-Tyne; and Folkestone; to lie upon the Table.

STREET NOISES BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour from Lincoln; Llanhilleth; Wrexham; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented of Forty-seventh Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, ETC.) (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 78, of Session, 1899) [Address, 31st January; *Sir Charles Dilke*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March. 1900, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

CIVIL SERVICES, 1900-1901 (SUPERANNUATION AND RETIRED ALLOWANCES).

Copy presented, of Appendix to the Estimate for Civil Services, Class 6, Vote 1, containing a list of Superannuation and Retired Allowances payable on the 30th November, 1899 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 118.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (NAVY VOTES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 24th March 1900, under the appropriation Act, 1899, authorising the temporary application of Surpluses on certain Navy Votes for the year 1899–1900, to meet excesses on certain other Navy Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119.]

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896 (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return in pursuance of the Acts as regards Ireland for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing, for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1900, (1) the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively to the Revenue collected by Imperial officers; (2) the expenditure on English, Scotch, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balances of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively which are available for Imperial expenditure (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 317, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR — BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Mr. Schreiner has made representations to Her Majesty's Government with a view to prevent the Boer prisoners of war being sent to St. Helena; if so, what reply has the Government made; is this removal to a distant island necessary for the safe custody of these prisoners; and, if not, why are they to be sent to the island; and will Mr. Schreiner's letter and the reply of Her Majesty's Government be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) had the following question on the Paper: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Mr. Schreiner, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, has issued a protest to the Imperial Government against the deportation of Boer prisoners to St. Helena; and whether any reply to such protest has been given; and, if so, would he state the substance of the reply.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is the fact that Mr. Schreiner expressed objection to the removal of the prisoners to St. Helena, and that objection was communicated to Her Majesty's Government. Her Majesty's Government, having given the fullest consideration to the whole subject, do not see their way to alter their policy of sending a certain number of these prisoners to St. Helena.

MR. FLYNN: Was this removal necessary for the safe custody of the prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was dictated in part by military considerations.

PROCLAMATIONS AGAINST LOOTING.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he has any information to the effect that the farms around Ladysmith have been much damaged by the Boer forces during the investment; that the farmhouse of the Mayor of Ladysmith between Lombard's Kop and Pepworth Hill has been completely gutted, the furniture removed, and the walls of the buildings and their fittings destroyed, and that on the route taken by the British troops between Kimberley and Bloemfontein farmhouses have been sacked and burned or seriously damaged, and the furniture generally destroyed; and, if so, will general commanding officers be instructed to take all possible steps to prevent looting and destruction of property by the British forces.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member's question confuses two charges—one against the enemy's forces, accusing them of destroying property in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith; a second against British troops, accusing them of destroying property between Kimberley and Bloemfontein. No information has reached us from Lord Roberts in respect of either allegation. But the hon. Member must be aware that stringent orders have been issued by Lord Roberts to British troops warning them of the consequences of any such acts. I do not know of any similar order having been issued by the enemy's generals. Nor can I guess the hon. Member's object in confusing the two charges, unless it was to exhibit this gratifying contrast.

MR. FLYNN: I had no intention of confusing the issues at all. I think proclamations should be issued by both sides.

ARMY DOCTORS AT THE FRONT.

MR WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the highest and lowest remuneration to be paid to Army doctors engaged in the war in South Africa, out of the £15,000 provided in the Supplementary Estimates for pay of Army Medical Service, and the highest and lowest remuneration to be paid to civilian medical practitioners engaged in the war in South Africa, out of the £50,000 provided in the Supplementary Estimates for pay of civilian medical practitioners; and will he also state how many civilian medical practitioners offered their services gratuitously; and, if so, were any accepted.

MR. WYNDHAM: The highest rate of pay and allowances drawn by officers of the Army Medical Staff in South Africa is £1,752 per annum, and the lowest rate £336 17s. 6d. The remuneration of all civil medical practitioners in South Africa, except consulting surgeons, is £428 17s. 6d. a year; consulting surgeons are paid at the rate of £5,000 a year. Considerably over 3,000 applications have been received from doctors for employment in South Africa, but no record has been kept to show how many offered their services gratuitously. The gratuitous services of Sir Thomas Fitzgerald and of the late Dr. Grigg were offered and accepted.

CENSORSHIP.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the censorship now established in British South Africa includes in its operation letters or other documents passing in the mails; and, in that case, under what authority, statutory or otherwise, is it exercised.

MR. WYNDHAM: The censorship is established under the authority of Her Majesty's Government, and, as my hon. friend the Financial Secretary pointed out in a reply to a question put on 8th March, it is not desirable to make known particulars with regard to the manner in which the censorship is exercised.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: May I take it, then, that although a reply was given to me on March 8th as to the authority under which the censorship of telegrams is exercised, we are not to have a similar reply in respect of the authority under which the censorship of mails is exercised?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I do not construe the previous reply precisely as the hon. Gentleman does. In the Telegraphic Convention of St. Petersburg, 1875, undoubtedly there are articles which contemplate the censorship of mails during war. I have made a cursory perusal of the Convention of Washington, which is of a much later date, and I can find no such articles. But in any case such articles would only be inserted in anticipation of such action as any Government must take in time of war or rebellion; and anyone who is aggrieved must seek redress in the usual manner.

MARTIAL LAW.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War over what area in British South Africa has martial law been proclaimed, and what was the date of such proclamation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): With regard to the proclamation of martial law in the Cape Colony up to the 12th March, I have to refer the hon. Member to my answer of that date to the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire.* Since then on 22nd March Gordonia has been placed under martial law. With regard to Natal martial law was proclaimed over the northern part of the colony on 15th October, and over the whole colony on 23rd October. Martial law was also proclaimed in the Mangwe, Tuli, Matobo, Bulalima, and Mawaboni districts of Southern Rhodesia on 25th November.

SOUTH WALES BORDERERS—INSUBORDINATE VOLUNTEERS.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of John Garland and Tom Phelps, No. 7,553 and No. 9,563 respectively, Active Service Company South Wales Borderers, who recently volunteered at Newport, Monmouthshire, for service in South Africa; whether he is aware that after enlistment both these Volunteers were discharged for the sole offence of being absent one day without

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 371.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 569.

leave; and whether, seeing that other Volunteers who committed the same offence have been allowed to proceed to the front after punishment according to the regulations, he can hold out any prospect that these Volunteers will be allowed to proceed to the front in accordance with their desire.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am afraid that the hon. Member has considerably understated the offence committed by these men. They were absent from the inspecting officer's parade on the 10th February, and were duly warned that a repetition of the offence would lead to discharge. They were, however, again absent from inspection on the 12th, having broken out of barracks when prisoners at large. When they returned after thirty-six hours absence they had evidently been drinking heavily. After an interval, when they were considered sufficiently sober, they were ordered to be discharged.

ARMY COMMISSIONS — PROMOTIONS FROM THE RANKS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether in the existing dearth of trained officers he will consider the advisability of granting commissions to some of the young men now serving as non-commissioned officers and privates in Her Majesty's service, many of them now at the front in South Africa, who, prior to enlistment, passed the qualifying examination for the Army, but were not sufficiently high upon the list to enable them to gain admission at a time when the competition was abnormally severe.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Fifty commissions have been placed at the disposal of Lord Roberts to be given to all classes of troops under his command irrespective of rank or corps. In addition he has been asked to nominate a few deserving non-commissioned officers for promotion for good service. These will be exclusive of any who may hereafter be recommended for distinguished service in the field. And, further, eighteen non-commissioned officers who were noted as candidates for promotion have recently been selected for commissions, and will be gazetted as soon as they are reported medically fit.

SIR GEORGE WHITE AND THE WAR OFFICE.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Sir George White has stated that efforts were made by the War Office to supersede him, and that those efforts were prevented by Sir Redvers Buller; and, if so, what action is proposed by the War Office.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I shall repeat this question when Sir George White arrives in this country.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member may repeat the question, but I should like to take this opportunity of stating that, while I am always ready to give information on questions of fact, I am not prepared to discuss by way of question and answer in this House what is merely a mischievous repetition of unfounded rumours.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL, rising at a later stage, said: Perhaps the House will bear with me in making a personal explanation. The Under Secretary for War has said that I was using the power of questioning in order to put in mischievous suggestions, and the cheers with which hon. Gentlemen opposite received the statement proves how grave is the accusation against one in my capacity as a Member of Parliament. As this is a personal explanation, may I give the House the evidence on which I based my question?

*MR. SPEAKER: No, that is not in the nature of a personal explanation.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman was in order in making an imputation against me which is wholly unwarranted?

*MR. SPEAKER: I understood the Under Secretary to say that in his opinion these questions were mischievous. I do not think the hon. Gentleman said that they were asked from a mischievous motive.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I submit with great respect that the hon. Gentleman said they had a mischievous tendency.

*MR. SPEAKER: And it would be in order to say that.

*MR. WYNDHAM: What I said was that these rumours were unfounded, and

that their repetition was mischievous. So it is. I made no charge against the hon. Member; it was merely a statement of opinion in which I was perfectly warranted.

LORD METHUEN'S POSITION.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War with what command is Lord Methuen at present entrusted, and what is the nature of his duties, civil or military.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Lord Methuen is at present in command of the troops in the neighbourhood of Kimberley.

TUGELA ENGAGEMENT—COLONEL LONG, R.A.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Colonel Long, R.A., who was severely wounded in the battle which resulted in the reverse at Tugela, has sufficiently recovered be able to give an account of the circumstances under which the British guns were captured by the Boer forces; and whether, having regard to the circumstance that Sir Redvers Buller, in his despatch or communication with reference to the capture of these guns, states that Colonel Long was too ill at the time to give any explanation, Colonel Long's explanation will be duly published to enable a judgment to be formed of the whole transaction.

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have no official knowledge of Colonel Long's present condition, but from private sources we are glad to learn that he is making satisfactory progress towards recovery. It rests within the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa to report upon the proceedings of any officer under him.

ARMY CONTRACTS—SHIRTS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Londonderry, I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether any orders for shirts, and, if so, to what amount, have been placed with the wholesale houses in Londonderry.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The only shirts ordered by the War Office are flannel. Orders for these have been given to firms who have factories in Londonderry; these shirts, however, do not appear to be made there.

ARMY CONTRACTS—QUALIFICATIONS OF DIRECTORS' STAFF.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the members of the staff of the Director of Army Contracts have received any training of a business, technical, or commercial character; whether complaints have been received from contractors as to the visits of detective officers from the War Office to the premises of firms supplying stores to the Army; and what are the rules of the Department regulating the visits of these gentlemen to clothing, shoe, and saddlery factories.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The staff of the Director of Contracts have received adequate training in the business with which they have to deal, which is that of knowing when the enormous variety and quantity of stores required for the Army can be satisfactorily, quickly, and economically obtained. The inspection of the stores is conducted by skilled officers and men on behalf of the Department receiving the stores, and not by the contract branch. No complaints have been received in regard to the visits of officers from the contract branch referred to in paragraph 2. These visits are made under the orders of the Director of Contracts, to ascertain by personal inspection, either the progress that is being made in the execution of a current contract, or the capacity of a firm to undertake orders. Inquiries into labour questions also entail personal visits.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MR. HOWELL (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Messrs. Samuels, Army contractors, of Ludgate Hill, supply military stores to several Volunteer regiments; whether he will take steps to communicate to the commanding officers of such regiments the fact that Messrs. Samuels have been struck off the War Office list of contractors for supplying defective stores for the use of troops in South Africa; and whether he will give directions that no further orders for military stores should be given to the firm in question.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The War Office has recently been informed that Messrs. Samuels supply stores to several Volunteer regiments, but has not been informed of the names of such regiments. Means will be taken to acquaint Volunteer commanding officers of the decision of the Secretary of State in respect to this firm.

DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATE.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War at what date Lord Basil Blackwood, who appears in the Army List for March as holding the post of Deputy Judge Advocate to Her Majesty's Forces in South Africa, received this appointment, and whether the Government were aware when they made the appointment that he was a barrister of less than three years standing.

*MR. WYNDHAM: He was appointed on the 15th February on the recommendation of Sir F. Jeune.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: Can the hon. Gentleman answer the last few words of the question?

*MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Gentleman seems to be confusing the Deputy Judge Advocate with the Deputy Judge Advocate General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does not the Judge Advocate General appoint the Deputy Judge Advocate General?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I believe so.

CONVEYANCE OF HORSES BY RAIL.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the regulations of the War Office require that horses for the use of the Regular Army and the Yeomanry shall be carried by rail in open cattle-trucks instead of in horse-boxes, and shall be so carried without rugs or clothing; whether he is aware that, during the recent severe weather, the adoption of this regulation has caused serious injury to horses, especially clipped horses, involving considerable pecuniary loss, and whether reports have been received from remount officers condemning the regulation above referred to as cruel and uneconomical; and whether the officials of the department who have the charge of transport will be given a discretion in proper cases to provide clothing, and to allow the horses to be carried in horse-boxes instead of in cattle trucks.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The regulations provide for the conveyance of horses in cattle-trucks, which during severe weather are to be covered with tarpaulin sheets. Last December, however, instructions were given to cover the trucks with tarpaulin sheets in all cases, and the issue of horse blankets has been ordered for all horses travelling by rail during inclement weather. Since these orders have been issued there have been no complaints from remount officers, but discretion is left them to use horse-boxes in special cases if necessary. It is usually not possible to use horse-boxes when large numbers of horses have to be transported at once, because the necessary rolling stock cannot be collected.

NEW FORGING PRESS AT WOOLWICH.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether tenders have been invited for the construction at Woolwich of a 3,000-ton forging press; whether a press of this size and power is far larger than is necessary for the production of forgings of the size to which the War Office have repeatedly promised the private trade that the production of the Royal Ordnance Factories should be limited; and whether any and what change of policy in that respect is contemplated; and, if not, for what purpose is the 3,000-ton forging press required.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Tenders have been invited for a 3,000-ton forging press for erection in the ordnance factories at Woolwich to take the place of the present steam hammer, which is worn out. The press is larger than is necessary for the production of forgings of the size hitherto made in these factories. It is, however, intended to restrict the use of the press in ordinary time to the production of forgings of the size hitherto made; but it is considered necessary to have a reserve of power available in case of emergency.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the authorities consult experts on forging subjects, such as *The Times*?

[No answer was given.]

RIFLE RANGES IN ESSEX.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that the rifle range at Ilford is likely to be closed at no distant date, and that there are Crown lands in Essex on which suitable rifle ranges might be constructed without great cost, he will make inquiries into the subject with a view to providing additional facilities for Volunteer corps and rifle clubs recruited in West Ham and neighbouring districts.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The question is under consideration.

THE BLAKELY GUN.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will consider the desirability of taking steps to repeal the Act of Parliament of 8th April, 1859, Vic. 22, c. 13, so far as it relates to the invention of Lord Armstrong for guns constructed on the principle invented and patented by the late Captain Blakely, R.A., whose invention for guns was refused by the War Office, and subsequently adopted by the Department without any recognition or reward to the true and original inventor.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member has already been informed that his views of Captain Blakely's services are founded on a misapprehension. That being so, it is impossible to repeal the statute.

MR. WEIR: I shall call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

JAMESON RAID—RHODES-HAWKSLEY CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether the attention of the Public Prosecutor has been directed to the abstraction and receipt of certain letters from the office of Mr. Hawksley, solicitor; whether the information in his possession shows that such abstraction and receipt constitute criminal offences; and whether the Public Prosecutor intends to take any steps with a view to the prosecution of the parties implicated.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): No communication has been made to the Director of Public Prosecutions, nor has he any information beyond the statements which have appeared in the press. They are not sufficient to enable anyone to express an opinion whether a criminal offence has been committed. The case is not one in which the Director of Public Prosecutions would at present be justified in taking any action.

CORDITE—DANGER FROM SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION—EXPLOSION ON THE "REVENGE."

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the statement that a fire was recently discovered in the magazine of one of Her Majesty's ships, which could not be ascribed to anything except the spontaneous combustion of cordite, presumably of inferior quality; and whether, if the facts of the occurrence of the fire be as stated, an official inquiry has been held, and with what result; and if the fire, as stated, was found on inquiry to be due to the spontaneous combustion of inferior cordite, whether any steps are being taken to guard against similar accidents through cordite hurriedly manufactured to meet the present demand.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The occurrence referred to is presumably what happened in the magazine of the "Revenge," when one cartridge spontaneously ignited and set fire to two others in the same box. The other boxes of cartridges in the magazine were not affected. With regard to this occurrence I made a statement in the House, in reply to the hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne, on February 8,* that an inquiry had been held, and that the whole of the evidence had been referred to the Ordnance Committee for further investigation. The cause of the explosion has not yet been ascertained with any certainty. With regard to the second part of the question, there is no foundation whatever for the imputation that the explosion was in any way due to hurried manufacture to meet the present demand. The cordite which ignited was made in 1894, and there was no new cordite on board the "Revenge." The position of the Navy as regards the supply of cordite has not been such as to

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., page 917.

require the placing of any special or hurried orders. The orders for 1899-1900 were placed in due course in June last year, and those for 1900-1901 will be placed almost immediately.

FLOGGING IN NAVAL PRISONS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state whether the rules of Her Majesty's prisons apply to naval prisons; and who is the confirming authority in the case of sentences of flogging in naval prisons under the new Prisons Act.

MR. GOSCHEN: The rules of Her Majesty's prisons are applied by Admiralty regulations to naval prisons, so far as the special circumstances of the naval service admit. In cases of punishment by flogging in naval prisons under the new Act, the Visitors adjudicate. No superior confirming authority is provided for. These rules are applied to prisons abroad as well as at home, and reference to a superior authority would lead to inconvenience with prisons on foreign stations.

DELAGOA BAY—CONTRABAND OF WAR, ETC.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the information in his possession shows that the Portuguese officials at Delagoa Bay, as representing a neutral but friendly and allied Power, have done their utmost to prevent the passage of intending combatants and contraband of war through Portuguese territory.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Her Majesty's Government have no reason to believe that the Portuguese Government have in any degree failed to do their duty in preventing contraband of war from being landed at Lorenzo Marques.

TURKISH LOAN CONVERSION CONVENTIONS.

MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a convention for the conversion of the residue of the Four per Cent. Turkish Guaranteed Loan of 1855 was signed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Costaki Pasha in August, 1898; and, if so, whether application is to be made to Parliament during this session for ratification of the convention, he will explain what is the cause of the delay.

*MR. BRODRICK: The negotiations on the subject are incomplete and are at present suspended. I regret that no statement can be made at present respecting them.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—GOLDFIELDS DISTRICT PETITION.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was with the knowledge and sanction of the Colonial Office that the Governor of Western Australia, on sailing for England, left the petition to the Queen from the residents of the goldfields districts for the consideration of local Ministers; and, whether the usual course is to transmit such petitions direct to Her Majesty.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no official information in regard to the petition referred to. The proper and constitutional course in regard to all petitions from the self-governing colonies is for the Governor to submit them to his Ministers and forward them to the Secretary of State with their remarks.

INDIAN CURRENCY.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state what amount of gold in India and England respectively has the Indian Government acquired in connection with the proposed changes in its currency system; by what methods this gold has been drawn into the Indian Government's treasuries, here and in India; and to what extent, if any, has the issue and circulation of currency notes been increased as resulting from, or in dependence on, the gold in these treasuries; if he can inform the House at what date the Indian mints recommenced coining to replenish the active circulation of rupees, to what extent this increase in silver currency has proceeded up to date, and whether the mints or the currency department paid out gold to any appreciable extent in exchange for fifteen

rupees or currency notes; and what the amount or rate of profit derived from the issue of new token rupees is, and whether such profit will be credited to the currency department or to the general revenues.

*THE SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): (1) The Government of India holds at present about £7,900,000 of gold in India, and £1,500,000 in England. (2) The methods by which it was attracted are as follows: In India Government offered to receive gold in exchange for currency notes or rupees at the rate of one sovereign for fifteen rupees; in England the Secretary of State in Council sold telegraphic orders for rupees on the treasuries in India at the rate of one rupee for $16\frac{5}{32}$d. (3) The receipts of gold in the treasuries began to assume large dimensions about February, 1899, at the end of which month the outstanding currency notes amounted to 264 lakhs, while at the end of March, 1899, they were 2,820 lakhs; by the last return they amounted at the end of February, 1900, to 2,727 lakhs. (4) The coinage of rupees was resumed on the 25th of January last. (5) The addition to the coinage so far is believed to have been about 140 lakhs of rupees. (6) Gold has been paid out to the amount of about £244,000. (7) The rate of profit in coining rupees from fresh silver when silver is at its present price is about fifty-two per cent. (8) The Government of India have not reported their views as to the mode of showing such profit in the accounts.

CUSTOMS DUTIES ON SPIRIT—METHOD OF LEVYING.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the total amount of customs duties paid according to the last Annual Report of the Commissioners of Customs on the following nine articles, namely, chloral, hydrate, chloroform, colodion, acetic, butyric, and sulphuric ethers: iodide, bromide, and chloride of ethyl; at what amount does he estimate the increased customs duties proposed under the Finance Bill of this session to be levied on these nine articles; and whether, in view of the fact that the revenue to be realised is so small, that the proportions by which the duties hitherto levied on these articles is proposed to be increased vary from 5 to 28 per cent., and that no corresponding increase of duty is proposed in the cases of transparent soap and confectionery in the manufacture of which spirit is used, he will reconsider the question of disturbing existing duties on the nine articles specified.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The customs duties paid on the articles mentioned in the hon. Member's question amounted in the year 1898-99 to £2,349, and the increase in the duties is estimated to produce about £150. In the manufacture of these articles spirit, on which increased duty has to be paid, is used, and I do not think it would be fair to the British manufacturer who has to pay these increased rates to admit the like articles of foreign manufacture without any proportionate increase of duty. No increase has been proposed in the duties on confectionery made with spirit and transparent soap, as the proportionate increase would be too small to be expressed in any current coin.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: On what principle has the variation been made?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: On the proportion of the increase on spirits to the existing duty throughout.

ISLINGTON BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Islington Board of Guardians have refused to accept a report from their clerk as to the conduct of certain officials; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I understand that the facts are as stated. The Local Government Board, however, have no definite particulars as to the allegations contained in the report referred to, but inquiry is being made on the subject.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE WORKHOUSES.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, in view of the fact that there are four workhouses in the county of Montgomery

maintained at the public expense, and one of them is capable of housing all the inmates, whether he will make inquiries, and, if found practicable, take steps to reduce their number, thereby effecting a large annual saving to the ratepayers of that county.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have directed inquiries to be made on the subject.

GREEN PARK—SEAT ACCOMMODATION.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he could see his way to provide seats on the grass and under the trees in the Green Park for the use of those who frequent the park who are for the most part unable to pay for chairs.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): There are 118 free garden seats on or facing the walks in the Green Park, and the supply seems to me sufficient. There are many objections to placing seats in secluded places under the trees, but I will consider whether more of the seats near or on the walks can be reversed so as to face the park.

TRAWLING IN PROHIBITED SCOTTISH WATERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the captain of a British trawler has been sentenced by the High Court of Viborg to eighteen months penal servitude and a fine of £180 for fishing in prohibited waters, resisting the authority of the State, and causing through carelessness the upsetting of a fishing boat; and, having regard to the light penalties inflicted on the masters of trawlers who make a practice of trawling in prohibited waters around the coasts of Scotland, will the Fishery Board for Scotland consider the desirability of making a bye law for the imposition of heavier penalties and punishments than those now in force.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): My attention has not been specially called to the case referred to by the hon. Member in the first paragraph of his question, and I am consequently unable to say whether the facts there stated are accurate. As regards the second paragraph, Parliament alone can enact penalties and the Law Courts impose them. The Fishery Board have nothing to do with them.

SCOTTISH LUNACY BOARD MEETINGS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the number of board meetings held by the Lunacy Board for Scotland in 1897, 1898, and 1899, respectively; the number of board meetings attended by the chairman in each of these years; and the number of board meetings attended by each of the other unpaid commissioners during the same period.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: In 1897 twenty meetings were held by the General Lunacy Board. The chairmanship was changed during the currency of this year. The two unpaid members attended at fifteen meetings respectively. In 1898 twenty-six meetings were held, the chairman being present at twenty-five, and the other unpaid members at sixteen and nineteen meetings respectively. In 1899 twenty-seven meetings were held, the chairman being present at twenty-three, and the other unpaid members at twenty-three and twenty-four meetings respectively. I must add that while these are the numbers of the formal meetings of the Board, they do not nearly represent the amount of work done by the chairman and other unpaid members in connection with lunacy administration.

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the clerk of the Blackburn Board of Guardians made an application before the magistrates for an order for the removal from the Blackburn Workhouse of an inmate named Edward Murray to his birthplace at Kilmena, County Mayo, he having been born in Ireland in 1815, and having lived in England continuously since the year 1837; and whether, considering that legislation has been promised dealing with the question of deportation of paupers into Ireland, the Local Government Board will refuse to sanction the transfer of Edward Murray into Ireland at the expense of the Irish rates.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Gentleman will remember that I answered a question as to this case on Friday last. With regard to the second paragraph the Local Government Board have no power to interfere with the discretion of the guardians.

FAIR RENTS IN COUNTY KERRY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he can state the number of applications lodged by tenants in North Kerry to have fair rents fixed in Listowel and Tralee, respectively; whether he is aware that the cases of tenants whose applications were made three years ago are still unheard; and whether representations will be made to the Land Commission with a view of remedying the existing congested condition of tenants' applications to fix fair rents by more frequent sittings of the Sub-Land Commissioners.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): There are eighty-six cases from the Union of Tralee, and 112 from the Union of Listowel that have not yet been listed for hearing. None of the applications to fix fair rents from those districts have been outstanding for as long a period as three years. A list which will include cases from North Kerry will be issued as soon as the list containing cases from the southern portion of the county and at present in course of disposal has been completed.

MR. FLAVIN: Is it not the case that originating notices have been served in that district for a period of over two years, and yet have not been heard?

*MR. ATKINSON: I presume the Land Commission make the best arrangements they can.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that a tenant named Denis O'Sullivan, residing at Cahirciveen, County Kerry, a tenant under Trinity College, Dublin, holding about twenty-nine acres of poor land at a rental of £7 12s. 6d. per year, and a valuation of £5 5s., gave evidence in his application to have a fair rent fixed that it cost him in addition to the rent a further sum of £14 7s. in handfeeding the cattle for the past year. And also that he let for grazing purposes about ten acres of his holding at a loss of about 8s. for the year; whether he is also aware that the tenant served his notice to have a fair rent fixed in April, 1898, and since that date also asked the agent of Trinity College to have the rent fixed out of court by Land Commission valuer, which request the agent of Trinity College refused. And, also, Denis O'Sullivan and other tenants on Trinity College property accepted the valuation of the landlord's valuer, Mr. Rea, in 1882; and whether the Sub-Land Commission, when delivering judgment in this case, will fix the judicial rent so as to take effect the gale day next after the service of the originating notice.

I also beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that, at the recent Land Commission Court held at Cahirciveen, the valuer examined by Trinity College against the tenants was a local landlord named Captain James J. Magill, and that in many of the tenants' cases then listed for hearing the first judicial rent was 100 per cent. over the valuation; but that, notwithstanding this, the landlords' valuer, Captain Magill, swore that the rent for a second judicial tenancy should be in the majority of cases much higher than that fixed in the first judicial term; and whether he will ask the Land Commission to reconsider their decision in this court.

*MR. ATKINSON: The first question refers to a case which is at present pending before the Sub-Commission for decision. The Land Commissioners, under the circumstances, decline, and, in my opinion, properly so, to call upon the Sub-Commission for information as to the various matters mentioned in the question. The same remark applies to the next question on the Paper.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the valuer in this case has actually sworn in open court that the second judicial rents should be higher than the first?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

UNITED IRISH LEAGUE MEETINGS AT DONERAILE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state by whose orders and on what grounds, on the occasions of the meetings of the United Irish League,

held once a week in Doneraile, County Cork, of which Rev. J. M. Callaghan is president, a policeman stations himself at the entrance to the place of meeting and takes note of each individual entering.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): This question is apparently based on a newspaper report dated the 27th instant. The statement in the question is absolutely devoid of foundation.

MR. FLYNN: It is founded on the rev. gentleman's own complaint.

MR. ATKINSON: Then he is entirely in error.

IRISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Kerry County Council unanimously passed a resolution asking that a representative from Kerry be placed on the Congested Districts Board; and whether, owing to the poor and congested condition of a large portion of Kerry, some means can be found by which a Kerry representative will be added to the Board.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): I have already answered two similar questions on this subject to the effect that the number of members of the Board is fixed by statute, and that there is no vacancy at present on the Board.

*MR. FLAVIN: Have vacancies been created and filled for any other county in Ireland which is not so much congested as Kerry is?

[No answer was given.]

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDERS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Killarney Rural District Council have passed a resolution unanimously asking that a Bill should be introduced into Parliament to repeal Section 5 of the Act of 62 and 63 Vic., c. 31, validating the Orders of the Local Government, dated the 15th May, 1899, and the 17th July, 1899; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of acceding to the request of the members of the Killarney Rural District Council by introducing such a Bill.

MR. ATKINSON: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. I have already stated that it is under consideration whether it may not be advisable in the course of the present session to give the Local Government Board, by legislation, power to vary areas of charge fixed by previous Orders.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how soon legislation will be introduced?

MR. ATKINSON: I cannot add anything to what I have already stated.

SCARIFF WATER SUPPLY.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Local Government Board has received a petition from the inhabitants of Scariff in connection with the water supply scheme for that district; and what is being done in the matter.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The petition referred to has been received. The Local Government Board will issue orders for a local inquiry into the matter in pursuance of Section 15 of the Public Health Act of 1896.

IRISH FORESHORE RIGHTS—LORD MIDLETON AND THE BALLINACURRA FORESHORE.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy), I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade on what grounds the Board of Trade, when alienating foreshore, make a distinction as regards first communicating with the harbour authority between foreshore under water and foreshore which is not under water; will he explain why it is that, seeing that foreshore which is available for conversion into piers and quays is the most valuable, the Board of Trade let it pass into private hands without consulting the harbour authority; and, also, why, in selling the Ballinacurra foreshore to Lord Midleton, the Board of Trade did not make it a condition that Lord Midleton should grant to the Cork Harbour Board the lease which he had agreed to grant in 1884, and the granting of which the Board of Trade then prevented by refusing their consent.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon):

The Board of Trade, when considering an application for a grant of foreshore below high-water mark, communicate with the harbour authority in order to ascertain their views as to the effect on navigation of the works proposed to be erected on such foreshore. In cases of accreted land above tidal influence, no such question can arise. After the Board had agreed to grant a conveyance of the land in question to Lord Midleton, in order to avoid litigation as to title, they received a letter from the Harbour Commissioners asking that the land might be granted to them. The Board endeavoured to induce Lord Midleton to agree to grant to the Harbour Commissioners a long lease of the land, but they had no power to insist on such a condition. The Board are not aware whether the land sold is identical with that which the Harbour Commissioners desired to lease from Lord Midleton in 1884.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Cork Harbour Commissioners wrote to the Board of Trade in January, 1899, requesting that this foreshore might be vested in them for public purposes, and that it was not until the following August that the Board of Trade wrote in reply stating that a similar application had been received from Lord Midleton?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, but it does not in any way qualify the answer I have given. I understand that before the application had been received from the Cork Harbour Commissioners an arrangement had practically been come to with Lord Midleton.

MR. FLYNN: Then why was it not communicated to the Cork Harbour Commissioners for a period of eight months?

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade could not have acceded to the application of the Cork Harbour Commissioners without running the risk of serious litigation. They could not give them the title to land which was claimed by Lord Midleton as having been in possession of his family for 200 years.

MR. FLYNN: Will the correspondence between Lord Midleton and the Board of Trade be made available to Members of the House?

MR. RITCHIE: I think there is no necessity for anything of the kind.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman suggest to Lord Midleton the desirability of carrying out this improvement?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

R.I.C.—DISTRICT INSPECTOR TAYLOR.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that District Inspector Taylor, of Kenmare, visits and stays with Mr. Warden, of Derryguin, frequently; and that he also drives with Mr. Warden to and from the Sneem petty sessions court; and whether Mr. Taylor, who is a police officer, is acting according to the police regulations in associating himself so publicly with Mr. Warden, a local landlord, seeing that Mr. Taylor appears in cases where Mr. Warden adjudicates at the petty sessions court.

MR. ATKINSON: I was not previously aware that the facts are as represented in this question. I need hardly say that the constabulary regulations do not prohibit an officer of the force from visiting, associating or driving with a magistrate of his district under the circumstances stated. The Inspector General reports that the district inspector is an excellent officer, and that he performs his duties with great zeal, efficiency, and independence of all parties.

*MR. FLAVIN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that District Inspector Taylor also prosecutes in cases where Warden's tenants were the defendants, and Mr. Warden also adjudicates in those cases?

[No answer was given.]

EDUCATION, &c., SCHEMES—ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will propose the adoption by the House of Commons of an Order similar to that adopted by the other House of Parliament,* to the effect that where by statute any scheme, before it can be sanctioned by Order in Council, is ordered to lie

* See page 621 of this Volume.

upon the Table for a prescribed number of days, it shall be laid upon the Table in a printed form, and not otherwise; and thereupon shall forthwith be circulated to the Members of this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the hon. Gentleman is quite right in his statement with regard to the practice in another place. I see no reason why that practice, which is obviously a convenient one, should not be adopted here and I will communicate with the authorities of the House on the subject.

SEA FISHERIES BILL.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Second Reading of the Sea Fisheries Bill will be taken before Easter; and whether, in view of its importance to the fishing industry, a full opportunity will be given for its discussion upon the motion for the Second Reading.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We do not propose to take this Bill before Easter. I cannot give any pledge at the present moment as to when or where it will be placed on the Orders of the Day.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Will the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House now fulfil his promise to state what is the actual business to be taken before the House adjourns for the Easter recess, and on what days it will be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The enumeration of the Bills and the times at which I hope to deal with them are as follows:—The Bills the stages of which are practically completed are the Finance Bill, Army (Annual) Bill, and Electoral Disabilities (Military Service) Bill. The Second Readings that have to be taken are the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill, the Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill, and the Agricultural Holdings Bill. We shall, I hope, also finish the small remains of the debate relating to municipal trading; and I should like to get the Police Reservists (Allowances) Bill and the Naval Reserve (Mobilisation) Bill. As to these I do not think hon. Members will wish to say much. As regards the actual distribution of the programme, I do not propose to interfere with the rights of private Members on Tuesday, except so far as it may be necessary for the Finance Bill. I was under the impression that we should have to take a new clause in Committee of Ways and Means, but I now hope that that necessity may be avoided. My idea will be to take the Railways Bill first on Thursday, and the Agricultural Holdings Bill first on Monday. The Finance Bill will be taken on Friday, which will not be a day to be counted. The debate on municipal trading must be disposed of before the holidays, but I do not wish to see the House sitting on Tuesday for that purpose, and if Members will meet the plan half-way and enable the Government to get the Municipal Trading Resolution after the Railways Bill on Thursday, I should like to move first on Friday that the House at the end of the sitting on Monday do adjourn for the holidays. In that case the House would gain half a day, and for the purposes of many Members a whole day's additional holiday. As regarded the Education Code, I am not sure whether it would not be more convenient to postpone the discussion till after Easter, but I cannot make a definite statement on that subject until to-morrow, when I have to answer a question addressed to me by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Dartford Division of Kent. The House will see, therefore, that as at present advised I suggest that for Tuesday the business shall be the Finance Bill, if the stage is necessary, otherwise private Members' business: Wednesday, private Members' business: Thursday—(1) Railways (Prevention of Accidents) Bill, (2) Municipal Trading Resolution; Friday—(1) Motion for the Holidays, (2) Finance Bill, Third Reading. Monday, the Agricultural Holidays Bill, and possibly the one or two non-contentious Bills I have named.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): As the Agricultural Holdings Bill applies to Scotland as well as to England, and as the debate is hardly likely to be concluded in one sitting, will not the right hon. Gentleman reconsider his proposal to take it on Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The question is rather an unfair one. I want to give the House as long a holiday as I can, and the hon. Member's complaint would have

no foundation if I put the holidays off till Thursday.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I suppose we may take it that the Australian Federation Bill will not be taken before the holidays?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It will not.

MR. GRAY: Assuming that the debate on it is not taken before Easter, I take it that although the Code will come in force, the House will have an opportunity of discussing it apart from the Education Estimates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the discussion on the new Education Code does not take place on Thursday, I shall give a pledge that the new Code shall not come into operation until the House has had an opportunity of discussing it. That opportunity will be given, apart altogether from the Education Estimates, at a very early date after Easter.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): How, in view of the fact that the time for the discussion of the Code runs out on the 14th instant, does the Leader of the House propose to deal with the new Code? Does he propose to withdraw it entirely from the Table of the House, which I presume is the only course open to him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to the exact legal position. Anyhow, as soon as the month during which the Code lays on the Table comes to an end, the Education Department has the right to put the Code into force, but the right of Parliament to deal with the Code does not lapse with the month, and at any time during the year the House may give any verdict which it likes upon the propriety of the Code. It is quite true, therefore, that unless this is discussed before the holidays there will be a certain period—a very short period—in which technically the Education Department will have the right to put the Code in force without the House having had an opportunity of discussing it, but I propose to get over that difficulty by giving a pledge to the House that the Education Department will not put the Code in force during that period.

MR. FLOWER: But a certain number of managers have arranged——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! There is no question before the House.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): May I appeal to the Leader of the House to postpone the debate on municipal trading till after Easter? There is a good deal to be said upon it, and we only had an hour and a half to discuss it last Thursday, and I do not think it is unreasonable to ask for more time.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May we take it that the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill will not be taken before Easter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): May I again appeal to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Agricultural Holdings Bill. I should be the last to wish to curtail the holidays of the House, but many Members want to take part in the debate on this Bill. Is it the right hon. Gentleman's intention, if the debate is not finished on Monday, to move the closure——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I do not wish to put the question in an irregular form, but does the right hon. Gentleman intend to terminate discussion on Monday under any circumstances?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is a matter for the House.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: Then, does the right hon. Gentleman hope that the discussion will be concluded that night?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hope certainly is that the Bill will be finished, and I say it must be before we separate for the holidays.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) EXTENSION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 123.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 123.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consider-

ation upon Monday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 165.]

FINANCE BILL.

As amended, considered.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): On Thursday last, in Committee on the Finance Bill, the hon. Member for North Islington drew attention to the very anomalous state of the law with regard to the exemption from duty of estates of soldiers and sailors. As he pointed out, the estates of private soldiers, sailors, and marines are absolutely exempted from estate duty, whatever the amount of them may be. What is the obvious result of this? At the present moment a number of men of considerable means are serving as privates in our forces in South Africa, and the heirs of any of them who lose their lives in the campaign will be entirely exempt from the payment of estate duty. As the law stands there is no such exemption for the estates of officers and non-commissioned officers. A man who has been promoted on account of good conduct to the place of a non-commissioned officer, or who has for the same reason obtained a commission, loses under the existing law the privilege of exemption. My hon. friend held that this was extremely unfair, and suggested that exemption should be extended to meet these cases. The question was debated for a considerable time in Committee on Thursday, and I think it was felt that the proposal then made went somewhat too far. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield pointed out that there might be cases in which the widow or the children of an officer might be possessed of large means of their own, although the officer himself possessed very small means, and yet by his death they would under the clause of the hon. Member for Islington have obtained an exemption to which, I think, nobody can feel that they are properly entitled. I have endeavoured to see if it were possible to deal with the matter by some addition to the present system under which gratuities and pensions are granted; but on examination and consultation with the Secretary for War I found that it would be practically impossible, for various reasons which I need not detain the House by detailing. This matter is on an entirely different footing, and even in the point of time alone it would have been absolutely impossible to fit any provisions dealing with this subject into the existing system. I therefore propose the clause which stands on the paper—that on the recommendation of the Admiralty or the War Office the Treasury shall be permitted to remit so much of the death duties as the circumstances may seem to justify, provided that in no case shall the remission exceed the sum of £150, which would be the amount of death duty on a sum of £5,000, and that it shall only apply to property going to the widow or the children of the deceased officer. I hope that in its present form the clause will receive the approval of the House. I am sure we are all desirous to do everything that is fair to the relatives of officers who die in their country's service.

New Clause—

"(1) Where any person dies from wounds inflicted or disease contracted, within twelve months before death, while on active service against an enemy, whether on sea or land, and was, when the wounds were inflicted or the disease contracted, either subject to the Naval Discipline Act or subject to military law, whether as an officer, non-commissioned officer, or soldier under Part Five of the Army Act, the Treasury may, if they think fit, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State or of the Admiralty as the case requires, remit, up to an amount not exceeding one hundred and fifty pounds in any one case, the whole or any part of the death duties (within the meaning of sub-section three of section thirteen of the Finance Act, 1894) leviable in respect of property passing upon the death of the deceased to his widow or children.

"(2) This section shall take effect in the case of any person dying since the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

brought up, and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): This clause is of enormous importance, and under the altered circumstances, with the limitation imposed, it becomes rather difficult to vote against it.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: May I intervene in order to explain what I omitted to do just now, that I have had two cases of great hardship before me during the last two months—one affecting

the widow of an officer, and the other the relations of a non-commissioned officer.

MR. BROADHURST: I quite agree that the right hon. Gentleman has fully redeemed the pledges he gave last Thursday, but I would press him while he is making this concession to go further, and say if he cannot promise some equal advantage to the widows and orphans of private soldiers and sailors. That was a point I submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Thursday last. I think a private soldier has a right to demand it. I pointed out that this was a new proposal of legislation, and capable of great extension. When the right hon. Gentleman was President of the Board of Trade he had brought under his notice several cases where valuable lives were lost in the endeavour to save others, both in the lifeboat and fishing services. Such cases, I think, are entitled to this concession, and should have it in addition to the amounts which, in one or two cases, the right hon. Gentleman awarded at my instance. All these matters must be taken into consideration. There are many dangerous trades—miners, sailors, and others are constantly engaged in dangerous work in which enormous numbers of lives are lost, and such cases ought to come within this clause. That is a point we are entitled to urge, but I shall not vote against this new clause, although it does not go so far as I could have wished.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he agreed with the point which had been made as to persons who lost their lives when endeavouring to save those of others, and could have wished that the general class of case might have been included in the clause. There was, however, great difficulty in safeguarding all these matters at one time, and the new clause therefore ought to be taken as an instalment of what was to come. He thought the clause would meet the various cases fairly well, and the House might leave the details of the working to the Treasury. He thought the clause would be received with great contentment by the community, and that it would do away with the grievance now felt.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside) said the clause now proposed was a very great improvement upon those discussed on the last occasion, but it had one weak spot, which was that whilst the officers received this consideration the rank and file did not. As a compromise the clause, no doubt, was a very fair one.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) wished to know whether it was clearly understood that the word "remit" also meant "refund." It was a matter of some importance, as the right hon. Gentleman would see.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A drafting Amendment will put that right.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) characterised the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman as a compromise which, although it did not cover all that was desired, went some way in that direction. No one desired to object to anything in the nature of allowances being given, but grave objection was taken to the fact of such a thing being fixed on the death duties. The clause proposed, however, specifically fixed a limit of £150, and he therefore did not oppose it, and he hoped the House would come to a unanimous conclusion upon it.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give the Treasury a descretionary power to include property passing to mothers. There were many such cases in which there might be great hardship if this were not done.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge) pointed out that the somewhat acrimonious character of the previous debate on this question arose from a misunderstanding between hon. Members. On the one side it was thought there was a want of sympathy with the officers, and on the other that there was no sympathy to the private soldiers. The new clause had dispelled that misunderstanding, and for his part he accepted it most heartily, and congratulated hon. Members opposite on having come to the same conclusion.

*MR. BUTCHER (York) thought the clause put down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer avoided many of the objections which had been raised to the clauses previously proposed. The

existing exemption in favour of estates of "common soldiers, seamen, and marines" did not meet the case of the non-commissioned officer, who would get no exemption at all. The clause now proposed would remove this defect, and he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having brought such a proposal before the House.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) desired to express his concurrence in the way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had settled this difficult question, but also to ask one question upon a point which was merely a matter of drafting. He wished to know whether the word "children" would include "grandchildren." It might happen that "children" had predeceased their father, leaving only grandchildren surviving, and in that case would the word "children" embrace grandchildren?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The use of the word "issue" would meet that difficulty.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.) thought the words of the clause ought to cover those who were drowned whilst on active service. If a man, for instance, was proceeding across a bridge or assisting to bridge a river and got pushed into the water and was drowned, the clause ought equally to apply to him.

Question put and agreed to.

MR. GEDGE (Walsall) pointed out that the clause as worded would not cover cases where death took place from accident. He moved the insertion of the words "or by accident."

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'contracted,' to insert the words 'or by accident.'"—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH said he had no objection to insert after the word "inflicted" the words "accident occurring."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Butcher.

Clause amended, by inserting, in line 1, after the word "inflicted," the words "accident occurring," and by inserting, in line 4, after the word "inflicted," the words "the accident occurred."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. GRANT LAWSON said the proposed exemption would not apply in cases where the duty had already been paid. If money once got into the Treasury it could not be got out again. He suggested that words should be inserted which would enable those coming within the scope of the clause to get duty refunded where it had been paid.

Clause amended by inserting in line 8, after the word "remit" the words "or in the case of duty paid, repay."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. GALLOWAY proposed the insertion of the word "mother." He believed the right hon. Gentleman would make the clause extend to grandchildren, and the case of a mother might be more deserving than that of grandchildren. He understood the whole question was one of discretion, and not an absolute instruction. There were cases in which a mother might have been entirely dependent on a son.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 12, after the word 'his' to insert the word 'mother.'"—(*Mr. Galloway.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'mother' be there inserted."

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the hon. Member will not press this Amendment. A mother is not the only person who may have been dependent. A father, a grandfather, or a sister may also be dependent. I do not think we can go beyond the widow.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) suggested that his hon. friend and the Attorney General might be reconciled by substituting for "children" the words "lineal descendants or ascendants." There was a very strong case for the father and mother, in spite of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said. Surely it was very hard that a mother, a father, or grandchildren should not be relieved in the same way as the others.

MR. BROADHURST reminded the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the hon. Gentleman opposite that they came to a friendly understanding last week, when the relief was limited to the widow and children. If they once began to move from the point then agreed upon there would be considerable difficulty.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said the words suggested by the hon. Member for King's Lynn were distinctly limited. They would meet the case of a father or mother, and of a grandfather and grandmother, and also of children and grandchildren, and stop at brother and sisters, cousins, and so on.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment made—

"In line 13, by leaving out the word 'children,' and inserting the words 'lineal descendants, instead thereof."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. GIBSON BOWLES moved the insertion of the words "or ascendants." The clause included children and grandchildren. They had got them all in the descending line, but surely they should have them in the ascending line. There would not be many of them. It would have the smallest possible effect on the revenue. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would agree to this.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last inserted, to insert the words 'or ascendants.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR. M. HICKS BEACH hoped that hon. Members would not agree to this Amendment. He thought this particular benefit ought to be confined to the widow and lineal descendants.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment made—

"In line 13, by inserting, after the words last inserted, the words 'if the value of the property for estate duty so passing does not exceed £5,000.'"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Clause, as amended, added.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton) drew attention to the proposal to increase the duty on chloral hydrate, chloroform, collodion, acetic, butyric, and sulphuric ethers, and iodide, bromide, and chloride of ethyl. The increased duty was estimated to produce only an additional £150, and it certainly appeared to be mere pedantry in a War Budget to increase duties on nine articles for the purpose of raising that insignificant sum. Moreover, the duties were increased in a most arbitrary fashion, the increases ranging from 5 per cent. to 28 per cent. He therefore moved to omit from Clause 5 the words enacting these increases of duty.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 3, to leave out from line 31 to the end of line 4, in page 4, both inclusive."—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I quite agree that this is a very small matter as regards the revenue, but whenever the duty on spirits—with which we are dealing in this clause—has been increased, these higher duties have been charged on articles into the composition of which spirit enters. It has been the invariable rule in such cases to increase the duty in proportion to the amount of spirits used and the amount by which the duty on spirits is increased. I do not think I should be justified in agreeing to the Amendment, which, although the amount of revenue involved is small, so far as I can judge, is a departure from the regular system. If I agreed to this suggestion the result would be that in regard to these articles foreign manufacturers would be placed at an advantage as compared with British manufacturers. I do not think that would be fair, and I cannot agree to the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. GEDGE moved to omit the first sub-section. The history of the clause which this sub-section proposed to omit was exceedingly curious. When the Finance Act of 1894 was before Parliament, the present First Lord of the Treasury on the Second Reading made a very vigorous speech, in which, amongst other objections, he brought forward a

very great hardship which the clause referred to was afterwards inserted to prevent. The case in question was that of a man who had insured his life or saved some small amount for the benefit of his family, but who afterwards married a wealthy woman. By reason of his having a life interest, enjoyed perhaps for a very short time, in her fortune, when he died the two estates for the purpose of the duty were aggregated, and by reason of the small property he had provided being aggregated with the larger fortune, his children had to pay a much higher rate of duty, even though they had never had any benefit from his marriage. The Government of the day very carefully considered the matter, and the then Attorney General brought in a clause to meet the case. That was the very clause this sub-section proposed to exclude. Although he had not at all expected the Chancellor of the Exchequer would move to repeal that Finance Act, he had thought after the objections which were again and again urged against it by the then Opposition, the right hon. Gentleman would, at all events where hardships had been shown to exist, do something to remove those hardships. One or two little things had been done in that direction, but here was a case exactly the opposite: a clause put in to meet an admitted hardship was now to be taken out for no reason whatever. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to let it be said that the Government when in power adopted a course entirely different from that pursued in opposition.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 37, to leave out from the beginning of Clause 12 to the word 'interest,' in line 41, inclusive."—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I deny altogether that I have taken up one line while in opposition upon this question and another while in office. This is not my clause, but, in the first place, it is the result of considerable debate in this House; and secondly, it is the result of a very careful inquiry by a competent Committee. I do not think I could take any other course than that of adopting the recommendation of that Committee.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN said he fully endorsed what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, although it tended to tighten the Act in some small particulars. They had to recognise the fact that this clause was brought forward in the interests of the taxpayers, and it was a matter of give and take. In the existing proviso in Clause 4 there were certainly some exemptions which were not defensible. They had been referred to in Committee, and he did not think it was necessary to repeat them. There were certain hardships which required correcting, and the object which the Committee had in view was to relieve the taxpayer by removing those hardships. With regard to the specific case of the widow who married again, alluded to by the hon. Member for Walsall, it was one which was very difficult to follow, but he did not think the hardship was a severe one, and the instance given was certainly not a common one. Cases had frequently arisen where the youngest child had to pay, instead of 3 or 4 per cent., as much as 8 per cent., because a different property altogether passed to a different person. That hardship had been repeatedly brought before this House, and had been taken into consideration by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was in removing that great hardship that a very small hardship might have been created in the case to which the hon. Member for Walsall had referred.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that undoubtedly this clause screwed up the Finance Act. As regarded aggregation, there used to be no stronger advocate of it than the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Attorney General. It was always felt that hitherto aggregation had been unsatisfactory, and a Committee was appointed to consider the matter. He was very much surprised that the only logical way of dealing with this matter was now going to be rejected in favour of this extraordinary and complicated clause. In reference to this subject he thought that upon a previous occasion they had obtained a concession from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, but now it was going to be taken away from them by a member of their own household. He was afraid that it was the hon. Member for Woodbridge who whispered these hard cases in the ear of the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer, and then the right hon. Gentleman immediately drafted a clause to get rid of these hard cases. We ought to deal with this matter upon settled principles, and not with a view of meeting hard cases. This Act, having gained £40,000 by screwing up, then proposed to give back, not to the same taxpayers, but to somebody else, another £40,000 through the ordinary proviso at the end of the clause. That seemed to him to be a most complicated proviso, because the same property would have to pay two different rates of death duties, and that would add a very extraordinary complication to the Act. The object should be to make the Act less complicated, and ease it down rather than screw it up. He had strong objections to this clause, and he was afraid that if a division was taken he should have to oppose it. He felt a strong objection to this clause on the ground of proprieties of taxation and the difficulties it would introduce into the administration. A Finance Act should be dealt with on settled principles, and not by the introduction of complicated proposals to meet particular cases. The proviso introduced was a most complicated one, and he was sure it would work in a most extraordinary way.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. URE (Linlithgowshire): This Bill is a recognition given for the first time by a responsible Government of an injustice inflicted on a certain class of landowners in Scotland. The recognition is somewhat tardy, but we nevertheless hail it with satisfaction. Speaking for myself, if the Bill would remedy the injustice it recognises I should not be inclined to offer it any opposition. But it will do nothing of the kind, and makes no such attempt. If the Bill were passed to-day the injustice would reappear to-morrow, with perhaps a different complexion, but in an exaggerated form. Before proceeding to a division to-night we must make up our minds whether it is right and fair that the ownership of land in Scotland should be linked to an obligation to support the ecclesiastical edifices of one denomination of professing Christians or not, because this Bill gives a legislative imprimatur to the obligation. If it is right then all landowners ought to bear the burden; if it is wrong all of them ought to escape the burden. But merely to shuffle the cards and to attempt, as this Bill does, a readjustment of the burden by lightening it upon one man, relieving a second, and overloading a third, is merely to court disaster, and to leave the last state of the luckless landowner worse than the first. To make good my position it is right that I should invite the attention of the House to the existing state of the law on the subject. By a series of statutes, dating back upwards of three centuries, the old Scotch Parliament laid upon the shoulders of the parishioners the duty of providing church, manse, and burial ground for the parish. There was a fine spirit of equity pervading these old laws. The burden was laid on the shoulders of the parishioners because it was supposed they would derive the advantage. According to the ecclesiastical law of Scotland the parishioners were entitled to go to the parish church to hear the Word preached, to have the sacraments administered and to claim the spiritual superintendence of the clergyman. The old laws did not inquire whether the parishioner would attend the church or not; that was a matter of perfect indifference, dissent being a negligible quantity in those days. It was assumed he would attend if he were capable of attending and if he were an examinable person—a person over the age of twelve years is the law, provided that Church accommodation should be given to him in the parish. The obligation of the heritor to provide an ecclesiastical edifice in the parish in which he was a landowner was linked closely with his right to share in all the advantages. There was connected with his ownership a right to share in the area of the parish church, and he was entit ed to have a share in the allocation of the seats in the church edifice. So closely was this right connected with his obligation, that when

a landowner died, the right to share in the area of the parish church passed to his heir, and if he sold his land, so closely did the old laws recognise the burden and the obligation on the one hand, and the right on the other, that without any mention being made the right passed to the purchaser. These old laws said nothing about the method by which this obligation should be allocated among the different landowners in the parish. In those days there was no valuation of the land in Scotland, except perhaps a valuation made about 1280, and the old laws contemplated that the burden should be borne proportionately to the rental of the land. In the days of Cromwell, of whom we have heard much recently, a valuation was made for taxation purposes of all the land in all the parishes of Scotland, and this valuation was adopted as the basis for ecclesiastical assessment. It was known then as it is known to-day as the valued rent, and the man whose land was valued in the days of the Protector is known now as then as a valued rent heritor. It cannot be denied that the absolute value of the land in Scotland to-day is different from its absolute value in the days of the Protector, but then, so long as the conditions of a parish remained entirely unchanged, a valuation made even in the middle of the seventeenth century affords a perfectly fair basis of assessment, because the different heritages in the parish were valued at the same time, and on the same principle, and the ratio remained constant. But where the conditions of a parish have changed, where the landowners have increased enormously in number, where great industrial commercial communities have settled down, where great public bodies have become landowners, and where great railway companies and mining enterprises exist it is quite obvious that to retain the valuation made in the days of the Protector would inflict an injustice on the respective owners of land, because that basis of taxation would mean that recent landowners and the industrial enterprises which had sprung up in recent years would escape altogether. Accordingly, whenever the conditions of a parish had changed, when it no longer retained its pastoral or agricultural character, and where assessment on the basis of the old valuation would lead to injustice, that assessment was to be abandoned in favour of the actual rent of the land. So Lord Chancellor Eldon and Lord Thurlow laid down in a case about which we hear a great deal—namely, the Peterhead case. It is said that the judgment in that case inflicted an injury which has rendered necessary all these tinkering proposals about ecclesiastical assessment, and that it introduced a novel and startling change into the old law of Scotland. The Peterhead case did nothing of the kind. It is of venerable antiquity. The judgment was given on 24th June, 1802, and it is a little difficult to believe that the legislative zeal of hon. Gentlemen opposite has been stimulated into activity by a supposed wrong inflicted in the early years of the century. The cause is, in this instance, too far removed from the effect. The House of Lords in the Peterhead case did nothing more than give full and free play to the old statutes of which I have been speaking. What Lord Chancellor Eldon said was that, wherever it would work injustice to adopt the old valuation as a basis of assessment, wherever large industrial communities had sprung up, and wherever the number of landowners had largely increased, the actual or real rent must be taken as the basis, and that things must be regarded as they were, and not as they existed in the days of Oliver Cromwell and Charles II. That seems to me a perfectly correct principle, and I do not think that it can be disputed that it did any more than give full effect to the spirit of the old statutes. That being the existing state of the law in Scotland, all landowners in every parish being liable to ecclesiastical assessment in proportion to their rental, and having a right to share in the advantages of the ecclesiastical edifice, what is the change this Bill proposes? In the first place it proposes to put into the hands of two-thirds of the valued rent heritors power to assess the remaining third, and to insist that for the future the old valuation shall be adopted as a basis of assessment. The conditions may have totally changed, may have changed to such an extent that great injustice will result from adopting the old valuation made in the days of the Protector, and that in order to have complete justice it is necessary that the landowners should be assessed in accordance with the actual rental of the land. Yet although this injustice will result, the Bill provides

that two-thirds of the valued rent heritors shall have power to assess the remaining third, that the minority shall have an additional burden imposed on them, that in future all the remaining heritors shall escape the burden altogether, and that it shall be borne exclusively by the valued rent heritors. What is the reason for a proposal such as this? It is not in order to give free vent to the ecclesiastical generosity of the valued rent heritors. No Act of Parliament is required for that. If they are going to pay out of their own pockets for their own churches, manses, and burial grounds there is no law in Scotland or anywhere else to prevent them. But really the case for which this Bill is meant to provide is one where the majority of the valued rent heritors are supposed to sit in the parish church and to receive the ministrations of the parish clergyman. And their sense of justice revolts at the idea of taking other people's money for their churches, manses, and burying grounds when these other people, out of their own pockets, provide the ecclesiastical advantages which they themselves enjoy. That would be a good and laudable object; but it needs no Act of Parliament to put it in force. Nor is that the proposal in the Bill. The proposal of the Bill is not that these gentlemen should pay out of their own pockets for their own ecclesiastical advantages. The proposal is that they would be entitled, against the will of the majority, to force the minority to bear an additional burden in order that the majority should live quiet lives in their parishes, and not be disturbed by heart-burnings and bickerings. Now, can the most experienced Member of this House quote any precedent in support of a proposal by which Parliament places it in the power of a majority of the ratepayers to inflict such an injustice on the minority? Can a precedent be appealed to by which Parliament has relinquished its functions to rate or tax the parish and leave it to the wish, or it may be the whim or caprice of a majority, to impose that taxation upon a minority which may probably object altogether, on conscientious grounds, to take any share of the ecclesiastical assessments—a minority moreover of which nine-tenths are probably paying out of their own pockets for the support of the churches in which they themselves worship, and the manses in which the clergy live who administer the sacraments to them? There is no sort of precedent for a proposal like that. Why, Sir, should Parliament be asked to sanction a proposal by which the great industrial, mining, and railway corporations and the great municipalities will be relieved altogether of a burden in order that an increased burden may be laid on a third of the valued renters. If the assessment is right every one of them should pay the assessment; if it is wrong it should be taken off the shoulders of every one. The Bill goes on to provide another class of exemptions. It proposes to exempt from ecclesiastical assessment the churches, manses, and burying grounds of dissenters. Well, so far as the churches and burying grounds are concerned, the promoters of this Bill come, not one day, but a quarter of a century behind the fair. The thing has been done, rightly or wrongly, in the year 1874. By the 37 and 38 Vic. c. 20, Parliament has exempted the churches and burying grounds of dissenters from paying any of these rates. But then why should the manses escape? Why, the occupants of the manses are not asking for any relief. The occupants of the manses are the very men who are best able to appreciate the value of the services of their ecclesiastical brethren of the Established Church, and they are the very men with whom motives of brotherly love and charity are supposed to operate most powerfully. They do not ask for relief, and why do you offer them this relief? On what principle do you exempt the manses of the dissenters, and still leave the burden on the villas and cottages of the dissenters? Is there any great principle in taxing the one which does not apply to the other? The Bill goes on to give exemption to another class—the small feuars or gentlemen whose rent-roll does not exceed £50. These are to be exempted altogether if only the sum which they would otherwise be compelled to pay is met out of private charity. I venture to ask, if private charity is to be invoked for the purpose of relieving ratepayers from a legitimate impost, why should we draw the line at £50? Why should the opulent churchmen of the Established Church of Scotland be restrained in their freewill offerings? I am afraid that their ability to contribute is underrated as well as their willingness. I know them

well. They are of as proud and independent a spirit and as liberal as the dissenters; and if you only place before them fairly the question whether they want outsiders, who have nothing to do with their Church, to help them to pay for their churches, manses, and burying grounds, I have not the slightest doubt of the answer which they would give. They would scorn to take the money, if the question were fairly placed before them; and if you only tell them you want them to do for themselves what the dissenters do for themselves. I think that you would find that they are both able and willing to pay for their churches, manses, and burying grounds out of their own pockets. Why is this line drawn at the £50 rental, and the smaller feuars to be relieved out of private charity? I rather suspect that it is because the small feuars are, for the most part, dissenters, and active dissenters; that they all have votes; that nearly all go to the poll; that they are very active at public meetings; that they write letters to the newspapers; that they heckle your candidates; that they make themselves noisy and troublesome; and that this proposal is put forward in order to throw a sop to the small feuars, and to burke a general assault upon a system which you well know to be defenceless. That is the real reason why the small feuar is to be relieved out of private charity. When this Bill was introduced last session there was a memorandum prefixed which said that the small feuars were to be relieved because of the friction, irritation and difficulty of collecting the assessment from them. If the difficulty of collecting an assessment affords a good reason for relief, there are good many more of Her Majesty's subjects besides small feuars in Scotland, who will come to this House clamorous for relief; and it says nothing for the frankness or candour of such a proposal as this, that its promoters rely on such an argument. The real cause of the mischief is that the condition of our parishes in Scotland has wholly changed since those old days when every parishioner was a landowner, and every landowner attended the parish church, and all ecclesiastical assessments were based on the comfortable theory that all landowners were Established Churchmen, and all Established Churchmen were landowners. In our days the population has enormously increased, the distribution of the population has changed; great industrial undertakings have sprung up, great mining enterprises have been established, great railways have been built, and great municipalities have arisen. The opinions and the social customs of the people have changed, and in particular the religious habits, so that what was eminently suitable for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is wholly unsuitable for modern arrangements. It would be only by a wonderful stretch of the imagination that anybody could now say that the parishioners are co-extensive with the landowners, and that the landowners of the parish are co-extensive with the attendants in the Established Church. But even the enormous increase in the number of Dissenters and small feuars does not, to my mind, afford the most striking illustration of the distance we have travelled since the statute of 1572, and of the difference between the old ecclesiastical arrangements and those of the present day. The most crying injustice of all is that inflicted upon the great railway companies: the great municipalities and the great industrial undertakings that have been planted in different parishes. All these undertakings, be it remembered, which own land in the parishes, are compelled to pay for ecclesiastical advantages which, from the very nature of the case, they are utterly debarred from enjoying. Take the University of Glasgow. It is a heritor in many of the country parishes, and I would like to know what share of church seat room, in parishes where it holds land, is allocated to the University, and what advantages it derives from the ministrations of the parish clergyman. Yet when a church has to be repaired, or a manse erected, the University of Glasgow, being on the list of heritors, must pay a share, probably a handsome share, of the cost. Again, take the Corporation of Glasgow. In that long chain of parishes, through which pass the pipes that convey the waters of Loch Katrine to the city, the corporation is included as one of the principal heritors. If you perambulated every one of these parishes, you would not find a trace of the Corporation of Glasgow. The husbandman tills his ground and reaps his crops on the surface to-day, as he did in the days of Oliver Cromwell;

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but if you go down many feet beneath the surface, there is a longitudinal space where repose the Loch Katrine water-pipes; and it is because of that space and these pipes that the Corporation of Glasgow figures as the principal heritor in most of these parishes. I should like to know what advantage the Corporation of Glasgow derives from the ministrations of the parish ministers of Aberfoyle, and Killearn, or Strathblane; and what share in these parish churches is allocated to the community of the second city in the Empire? We all know that they derive no advantage whatever; and yet, when in any of these parishes an ecclesiastical edifice requires to be erected, or to be repaired, the Corporation of Glasgow is come down upon, and is compelled to pay most handsomely for the churches which it cannot enter, and for the manses the occupants of which it can never listen to. Hitherto I have spoken only of the burden of obligation; but I wish to say a word about the rights. Every parishioner has a right to a share in the area of the parish church. Do you propose to deprive them of that right by this Bill, or to leave their rights at the mercy of two-thirds of the valued rent-owners; or to the rather precarious mercy of the private donor—the man who is prepared to give private charity for the purpose of relieving the small feuar? Are you going to put it in the power of two-thirds of the heritors and private givers to the funds of the Church of Scotland to deprive this gentleman of his right to relief? I know very well that there is a power in the Bill that, in the discussion upon plans for a new church or a new manse, the gentleman who is to be relieved of his assessment is to bear no part or lot. He is to be excluded entirely from offering an opinion on these plans. But this provision is futile. The whole discussion will be over, and the plans will be settled long before the kirk session has collected the money necessary to relieve the small owner. This is all a bagatelle. The real question is, what are you going to do with the rights? What do the Government propose to do with regard to the rights of small feuars, whom it is proposed to relieve under this Bill of their burdens and obligations? If the proposal is this, that they are to be deprived of their rights at the wish, the whim, the caprice of a majority of their own fellow ratepayers, then this gives additional emphasis to our objection to the proposals contained in the Bill, by which Parliament is invited to relinquish its own rights and its own privileges, and allow the assessment to be imposed not by Parliament, but by the wish of a small and interested number of people in the parish. I wonder whether, for once in a while, one may be able to appeal to Members for England, Wales, and Ireland, and ask them to leave us to settle this question without their intervention at all. If there ever was a case in which such a Bill might be legitimately left I think this is that case. This Bill relates peculiarly and distinctly to Scotland. It is a Bill which is characteristically connected with our ecclesiastical system of Scotland, and with regard to which any other nationality can really have very little interest, and probably very little knowledge. I know if my appeal was successful what the result would be. The result would inevitably be that this poor, shiftless measure would absolutely vanish from existence, and some day there would be found either this Government or some other ready and willing to take its courage in both its hands and snap for ever the link which connects land-ownership in Scotland with the burden of bearing ecclesiastical assessments, and trust to the independence of spirit, the pride, and, I would add, the abundant generosity of the friends and adherents of the Established Church to pay for the churches that they themselves worship in, for the manses whose occupants preach to them the Word, and for the burying grounds in which some day they will rest.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I rise to second the Amendment which has been so ably and lucidly submitted by my hon. friend. He has relieved me from the necessity of attempting to describe what ecclesiastical assessments are, and I would only add to what he said that, being intermittent, coming at irregular intervals, and being assessments to which a number of those called upon to pay them strenuously object, many of them on strong conscientious grounds, they give rise to very considerable friction and very considerable irritation. There is hardly a parish in which there are not many objectors who refuse to pay, and who allow their goods to be

seized; constantly there are scandals, and certainly they do nothing to strengthen the establishment. The ostensible object of this Bill is to get rid of these scenes. The ostensible pretence is that it is to get rid of a grievance. A grievance certainly exists, but so far as this Bill is concerned it may be described as a pill to cure an earthquake. One grievance which it does not pretend to redress is levying assessments on the manses occupied by ministers of dissenting churches. The Bill is illusory. It proposes to give a greater advantage in that direction. It proposes to relieve churches and burying grounds of rates, but, as has been pointed out, that has been done long ago, and it is really a pretence of doing so that is made in this Bill. The fact that dissenting churches and burying grounds have been relieved from assessments by 37 and 38 Victoria was brought before the attention of the House by the hon. and learned Member for the Border Burghs in the debate we had on the Bill last year, and I cannot conceive how those in charge of the Bill did not avail themselves of the knowledge put before them in drafting this Bill. As to the proposal to relieve ministers of dissenting denominations, my hon. friend has pointed out that no case has ever been made on their behalf. No scandal, so far as I remember, has ever arisen on the manse rate. In some cases, ministers, especially those belonging to the United Presbyterian Church, have refused to pay, and when they have refused to pay the matter has never been pressed. The money has been found in some other way, and no cause of complaint consequently has arisen. But the grievance occurs, as my hon. friend has said, chiefly among the poorer heritors, because among the poorer heritors will be found a larger number of dissenters. The Bill does absolutely nothing to carry out its ostensible object. It provides for the kirk session giving relief from assessment to heritors under £50 rental if the kirk session contributes the deficiency. As the law stands at the present moment there is nothing to prevent similar relief being obtained. In innumerable cases at the present moment, rather than face the disagreeables incidental to the collection of the assessments, members of the Church of Scotland put their hands in their pockets and subscribe everything necessary, and no assessment is levied. This Bill has absolutely no machinery to encourage or to enforce any contribution, and as the Bill now stands, practically, if assessments were levied for ecclesiastical purposes, everything would go on as at present. The amount to be raised would be decided, and the assessment would be levied unless the kirk session handed over an amount equivalent to what would be the loss by loosing the ratepayers under £50. No change whatever would be made in the proceedings that would take place under the existing law. Another feature of the Bill is that it makes no provision for any lesser reduction. It does not say that the kirk session is to hand over an amount equivalent to that required to dispense with rates under £20, as in the Bill of the hon. Member last year. The deduction should be made equivalent to the amount which the voluntary contribution would cover. It says nothing of the sort. It says only for the amount handed over sufficient to admit of the reduction on rentals under £50 the deduction should be made. The Bill so far as this object is concerned is an absolute sham. It is to the extent of two-thirds illusory, as has been shown, so far as it provides for the exemption of dissenting churches; and so far as it provides for those under £50 rentals, it is an absolute sham. Not the smallest guarantee is taken before commencing operations that any money shall be subscribed. The machinery goes on as at present unless the money is voluntarily subscribed. Matters will stand precisely as they have stood for many years. Many attempts have been made to grapple with this Church rates question. My esteemed friend Mr. McLaren, who for many years represented Edinburgh in this House, brought in a Bill in which he proposed to make the payment of these church rates voluntary, as in the case of England. That was a radical method of dealing with the matter. The objection was that it relieved the landlord of a burden and made him a present of money which belonged to the State. That objection was put forward only by the extreme voluntaries. Later on, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen brought in another Bill, and he proposed that the relief afforded should be a reality. He made a guarantee by the kirk session of the necessary money a condition precedent for the operation of the Bill. That would have assured us that the relief

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would be a reality, and that the money would be in hand for the relief of the ratepayers before the work was commenced. Everyone would know how he was to stand. The present Bill makes promises of abatement, but there is not the smallest certainty that the abatement will ever be given. When the expense is incurred, no one knows anything of the extent to which it would be contributed, or whether there would be any money in the hands of the kirk session to enable them to avail themselves of this Bill. The Bill, therefore, effects nothing whatever on this grievance which would not be equally attained by voluntary action without the aid of this Bill at all. So far as this Bill contains any principle, the principle is a thoroughly retrograde one. If there was no provision for the maintenance of the fabrics of the Church at the public expense I do not think any party in this House would dream of imposing a rate for that purpose. Under this Bill, as my hon. friend has pointed out, new taxation is imposed on various people. Under Clause 1, as he explained, it is patent that two-thirds of the heritors coerce the minority into acquiescing in the rate, and it will impose a new burden on their shoulders. He did not exhaust that part of the case. He did not point out that it was not two-thirds in number, but two-thirds in value, and that they might vote personally or by proxy, and that any law to the contrary notwithstanding. Under the law as recognised and administered for more than half a century properties have been bought, sold, and held subject to certain well understood charges on these various properties. The Bill proposes to shift these burdens from one shoulder to another at the discretion it may be of a single heritor, and that man voting by proxy. I agree with my hon. and learned friend that the proposal to allow the incidence of taxation to be regulated in that arbitrary way is most retrograde and vicious. Is it going to be in the interest of the Church? In the debate last year the Lord Advocate used these words:—

"The first proposal in the Bill was limited only to cases in which the assessment had been in use to be imposed on the valued rent. It had been discussed on the one side as if this was universal, but that was not so. In that case it allowed a majority of the valued rent heritors to resolve whether the assessment should continue. He would remind the House that in many parishes in Scotland—in fact, over the whole of Scotland—where the heritors were friendly to the Church they had very often, sooner than put the real rent heritors to the annoyance of assessment, voluntarily dealt with that assessment as on valued rent, and did not insist that the assessment should be altered to real rent. When they came to the details of the Bill in Committee he thought it would be for the consideration of his friend in charge of the Bill whether it would not be better to put in some such Amendment as would provide for practical unanimity of the heritors to determine that the assessment should be levied on valued rent instead of by a bare majority." *

The right hon. Gentleman has raised the half to two-thirds, and made that two-thirds of value and not of individuals. Under Clause 3, which exempts church manses and burial grounds, a certain amount of new taxation is imposed. You have in the Bill as it stands, relief to dissenting churches. The injustice of assessing dissenting churches for the maintenance of the fabrics of the Established Church is evident and manifest; but the injustice of taxing persons who belong to other denominations—the Free Church, the United Presbyterian Church, and the Roman Catholic Church—for the maintenance of these ecclesiastical buildings is precisely of the same nature and precisely as great. Why should you exempt the dissenting churches, say, in a parish where two-thirds of the population are dissenters, and then proceed to levy two-thirds of those exemptions on the dissenters as individuals? There is no principle in that. The only principle is, if possible, to get rid of the objecting ratepayers, who insist upon being sold up, and whose case calls public attention to the grievance. There are two objects only attained by the Bill. The one is that you allow a majority of the valued heritors to coerce, it may be, a majority in number, and you relieve the dissenting churches from this rate. The ostensible object is to relieve the small heritors. That part of the Bill is an absolute sham. The Bill provides that the machinery shall go on as at present. The plans must be considered and the assessment allocated and levied on the total rental within the parish subject to the deductions on £50 rentals. That is the last step in the machinery of the Bill, and there is no guarantee that the step will ever be taken, and unless it is taken there is no obligation on the kirk session

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxx., page 639.

to raise the money, and if it is not raised, or the whole sum is not raised, the Bill becomes a dead letter. The clause makes no provision for remission of any lesser sum than that on £50. I do not know why the right hon. Gentleman selects £50. He might as well have chosen £100, or even the more modest sum of £20, and the sham might have been more apparent than it is. There is another provision in the Bill which, to my mind, is absolutely impracticable. It is to the effect that no heritor, who by reason of any exemption or deduction is relieved altogether from assessment, shall be entitled to take part in the discussion or vote at any meeting on the plans. How is that to come into operation? The exemption is the last stage of the proceedings. The discussion of the money required is the first step, and that appears to me to be a part of the machinery which will be absolutely unworkable. Last year's Bill was perfectly frank in saying that a man exempted from payment should not vote on the question. My hon. friend has called upon the Lord Advocate to say whether he has that intention in the present Bill. It seems to me it would be the case in parishes where valued rent is retained under Clause 1 of the Bill. A person who under Clause 3 of the Bill loses his power would in the absence of any specific direction retain his right. If that be the case it would make the anomaly greater than ever. That is one point in which the Bill this year is in any respect different from that of last. Otherwise the principles, so far as there are principles, are vicious; its drafting is as bad as could well be imagined, and altogther the Bill is such a thorough sham that I have great pleasure in seconding the motion of my hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. GORDON (Elgin and Nairn): The hon. Member who has just addressed the House has been strong in the use of the word "sham." The thanks of Members on this side of the House and of the majority of the people of Scotland are undoubtedly due to the Government for having taken up a matter of this kind as a Government Bill. The subject is small when viewed from Westminster, but it is one which has caused serious irritation from time to time in various localities where these assessments have been levied on the small feuars. The proof of the irritation has been proved in this House by the repeated efforts made on the Government benches and by private Members to urge Parliament to accept measures which would satisfactorily solve the question. There are two interests undoubtedly involved in this Bill, but I cannot for the life of me see why the hon. Members opposite should throw their opposition against the Bill when the Government are simply making an effort to relieve the small ratepayers whose contributions to this fund are infinitesimal, and very often the cost of collection is out of proportion to the sum received. I hold in my hand particulars of one case, in Perthshire, where the law has recently operated. The number of proprietors was 312; under £50 they were 198, but these 198 small heritors only contributed among them the sum of £99 odd. If anyone will consider the trouble of collecting £99 odd from 198 heritors he will see at once the improvement that this Bill will introduce in the ecclesiastical and social condition of Scotland. The total assessment required was only £532, and that involved a rate of about 5½d. in the £. The other interest involved in this Bill is undoubtedly that which rouses the opposition of many hon. Members opposite, namely, the interests of the Church of Scotland. But the Church in this case is not asking for anything. The Church is simply asking Parliament to permit her to relieve ratepayers of those charges now levied in favour of herself and to permit, with legal sanction, the removal of a difficulty which is frequently solved by private compromise, but which, as hon. Members know, is liable to be obstructed by cranks, or obstructives. The Government, I trust, will push this to a conclusion. It has been stated that the Government has had no popular pressure for the introduction of this Bill. I would beg to remind my right hon. friend that the unusual strength of the present Cabinet leads the country to expect steady progress with Government measures without popular pressure. Last year I was surprised on a quiet Wednesday afternoon, when I had

Sir Charles Cameron.

charge of a somewhat similar Bill, to find the whole of the Opposition—for once united—employing their official Whips to try to defeat a measure which certainly was for the benefit of the ratepayers, who have used their influence at election and at other times (and many of them are supporters of Members on the other side) to ask the House of Commons to solve this difficulty. The hon. Member for the Mansfield Division, as we all remember, met us in former days like the old Roman general with *Veni, vidi*, but we have failed to hear the *vici* follow. Surely the time has come, I am sure it has come in Scotland, when men, whether they have grown old in the service of the country, or whether they are young and unused to such narrow and parochial views of Church life, are sick of this Disestablishment question standing in the way of Church reform. The truth is that life is now larger and wider than the hon. and learned Member for Linlithgow supposes. He said this Bill was an attempt to burke the larger question. I challenge the hon. Member or any of his friends by his side to start a Disestablishment meeting in Scotland, and I defy him to get a good platform of liberal-minded Scotchmen to support the movement. Scotland is looking for a solution, no doubt, of ecclesiastical questions. Scotland is shrewd enough to know that the old Church of Scotland is based on a Constitution, and has privileges superior to any other ecclesiastical body in Europe. While I am glad to know that Church Union is in the air in Scotland, thus acknowledging the fact that our old distinctive peculiarities, which alone divided the Christianity of Scotchmen, are fading away even in those circles where once they were perhaps too highly prized, and possibly in another generation, or sooner in these liberalising days, we shall find the Disestablishment societies of England and Scotland are matters of past history, and that Presbyterian Scotland will be completely united.

MR. BIRRELL (Fifeshire, W.): A more contemptible, small, and indeed ridiculous measure has seldom engaged the House of Commons on an occasion of this kind. The whole scope and object of this Bill is to reduce, if you can, by a small means a certain amount of unpopularity which has always attached to paying for anything, and as there are a number of small heritors—people who hold little bits of land—who do not like to contribute to the Established Church of their country, it is thought good electioneering to remove from them a grievance, instead of taking the bull by the horns and making Church rates voluntary throughout the whole of Scotland. That is obviously the reasonable thing to do. As the thing stands at present, the burden of maintaining the churches and manses of Scotland is thrown upon the land. Well, that is an excellent social obligation which many on this side of the House have no cavil with. The whole burden being thrown upon the land, the land itself is cut up into small bits. The Bill says that because it is cut up into small bits is the reason why the large heritors should pay and why the smaller should not pay, but that is a thing which nobody can understand. We have lost in this House since the subject was last under discussion the late Lord Advocate, Mr. J. B. Balfour, now President of the Court of Session. In the interesting speech he made on this subject he used the following remarks—

> "He would assume that this was the kind of rate which was rightly imposed on land, and on that assumption the aim in the allocation of every rate on land with which he was acquainted was to make the burden of the rate proportionate to the extent or value of the land held by the person assessed. The large owner should pay proportionately to his amount, and the small owner to his. It was not a rate upon some personal quality of the owner, but upon the land."

The reason why you want to make the small owner no longer obliged to pay this is because the payment is unpopular, but you ride off on an explanation about the trouble of collection. You have got in Scotland an Established Church which represents the religious feelings of the great bulk of the inhabitants, and which certainly is not in any way disagreeable to many of us. You find that the small owners do not like paying, and you come forward in a spirit of relief and say you will relieve them from that obligation. You say that is a large, wide, and liberal measure dealing with the question, and you invoke the name of the Member for the Mansfield Division in your support. If you are going to maintain the Established Church in Scotland, maintain the principle on which in all these years pas

it has rested, namely, that the obligation of paying for churches and manses should be cast upon the land. The whole argument addressed to the House last year by Mr. J. B. Balfour really was not touched. Nobody replied to it. You are seeking to upset the historical principle of maintaining the churches in Scotland, simply because you find as electioneerers it does you harm, and because a certain number of the smaller heritors in Scotland, do not want to pay. You may pass this Bill if your majority enables you to do it, but one thing you will never be able to do, is to persuade anybody that it is a large, liberal, or just way of dealing with this question.

MR. ELLIOT (Durham): I cannot agree that this is an electioneering measure, when it proposes to redress a grievance. If it can be proved that the Church will be strengthened, that the church buildings will be maintained, and that new churches will be raised under the new provisions with less trouble to the minority of the people in a parish, I would say that so far that is all very decidedly in favour of the Bill. I should like the House for one moment to consider that this Bill is only another step forward in the direction in which Scotland has been moving for a long time past. It used to be the case that churches were largely built in England and Scotland out of public moneys. In England, as we all know, until quite modern times, there was a system of church rates. Many years ago these building grants fell entirely into abeyance, and in 1868 the Church Rates Bill was passed. Since then the Church of England has built and looked after the parish churches, and it is found, and this is the most remarkable part of the story, that in proportion as you decrease the amount given to the Church from the public funds, the voluntary contributions become greater and greater. It is really very astounding when you cast your eye over the amount given in England voluntarily to the building and repair of churches. I would suggest that if any great change is to be made in Scotland it would be wise to move in the direction we have hitherto moved in England—that is, as far as possible to rely frankly on the voluntary contributions, and deal with these difficulties in the way they are dealt with in England and Ireland. We have had little account taken to-night of the amount to which these assessments come. In 1880 or 1881 there was a Return moved for by Lord Balfour of Burleigh for a period of ten years ending with 1879. The total amount, roughly, was £400,000, or about £40,000 a year. That is the amount which has to be raised in order to maintain the fabrics, etc. It is a slur on the character of the Established Church to suppose that it cannot maintain its own church roofs and windows, and that the people are unwilling when the occasion comes to put their hands in their pockets and pay for these matters. I have never seen any objection in any church, Established or Disestablished, to the sending round of the hat. We are in Scotland a thoroughly religious people, and there is no difficulty in raising sums. I come now to say a word or two on the proposals of the Bill. I look at it as a reform of the law to remove or attempt to remove a grievance. The hon. Member opposite referred to the fact that the Corporation of Glasgow had to pay the assessment, and argued that there was something unjust and improper in their having to contribute to maintain the church of the parish. I cannot for myself see that there is the slightest injustice in that. If money is made out of the parish I see no hardship when you come to the assessment of the parish in raising money in that way. To carry out the principles of the hon. and learned Member, you might excuse spinsters and bachelors from paying the school rate of the parish because they do not get the benefit of the rate they pay. I say that to regard with regret the fact that these corporations and railways have lands in the local parishes is to make a great mistake as to where the grievance lies. Let us look at the precise redress of this particular grievance. If you propose to alter the practice of the law of rating, surely what you have to do is to make the rate fall equally and justly upon everybody, but this Bill proposes deliberately to prefer the inequitable system of assessment to the equitable and modern system. We talk about valued rent and real rent, real rent being the actual just rental which, as a matter of fact, is paid for the land, and when you come to railway companies, and so forth, I say that it is unreasonable when there is a common purpose in which the parish ought to be assessed, that

these undertakings should escape scot-free. Sub-section 2 of Clause 3 is certainly a most remarkable section. The grievance which, I think, ought to be redressed—if it is a grievance—is that the poor people are assessed. If that is a grievance against the Established Church, I should be very glad to get rid of it. The Government say that, inasmuch as it is a grievance and trouble to the poorer ratepayers to have to contribute this assessment, let us say that nobody who appears on the valuation roll at less than £50 should be troubled to pay the rate. I would rather follow the basis of the Church Rates Bill and say it should be voluntary, and I would make it voluntary payment to every extent. I should say, "Relieve the ratepayers frankly, and not say that those whose properties are valued under £50 need not pay unless they choose to do so." The proposal in this Bill is a very roundabout way of keeping up the appearance of equal dealing all round. Surely the Government have not been advised properly in this matter. The heritors ought to know what their assessments were likely to be, and what they were to be assessed for. As far as I understand the proposal—and my hon. and learned friend will correct me if I am wrong—it appears to me that if I am to be assessed, my liability to pay or not to pay will depend very largely upon whether a church bazaar has been a success or a failure. I believe there is a great deal to be said for the relief of the small ratepayers. Let us put down the real rent, with the provision that the ratepayers shall not be bound to contribute, but shall only contribute voluntarily, exactly as is the case with the English ratepayers in the matter of Church rates. I do not like to part with the subject altogether without saying a few words of friendly farewell. I have regretted for many years that this subject, if taken up at all, was not taken up on a grand principle. I feel to some extent rather guilty in regard to these small ratepayers, because it is about sixteen years since I proposed one of the earlier Bills, on the ground that you did not deal equally and fairly with all the ratepayers of Scotland. Perhaps, however, it is unwise to oppose a measure which does some small amount of good because it does not do a great deal more good, and because the principle has not been adopted which I would prefer now as I did then. Therefore, I am not disposed to throw back this subject for another fifteen or sixteen years. I can only say I regret that the Government, in attempting to redress the grievance, has not faced it on a sounder principle, from which better results might have been obtained.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): When this debate comes to be considered in Scotland, I do not think the friends of the Church can complain of the weight of the arguments against the Bill. I cannot follow the hon. Member for Linlithgow, who moved the rejection of the Bill, and occupied a large portion of his speech by an interesting historical retrospect, which doubtless brought very sound history to the knowledge of many Members of the House. But really I do not intend to follow him on that ground. I have not a word to say against what he said in the historical sense, except to remind him in passing that when he spoke of the decision in the Peterhead case in 1802 it was quite obvious that he took the case which has been practically the cause of all the friction we have had in this matter. But the Court of Session in that day decided the other way, and the decision was reversed in the House of Lords. I do not intend to say anything about the Peterhead case, because I am quite certain that the House and the people of Scotland are not concerned in the antiquarian disputes of lawyers, but in the practical grievance that exists at the present time This Bill was never ambitious in aim, and never claimed any great things. What it did was that it claims to be, like the Bill of the hon. Gentleman behind me last year, a genuine attempt to remove the cause of friction that existed in the past, and which, so far as I know, never did good to anybody. Is it a fact that that friction did exist? I need not deny that, because the first remarks in the speech of the hon. Baronet who seconded the rejection of the Bill bore testimony to the occurrence of that friction. When I come to the Bill itself, and to the remarks the hon. Member for Linlithgow made in moving the rejection, frankly I admit that one part of the speech answered the other. The Bill, as everyone knows

who has read it, is divided into two portions. The hon. Member's argument against the first portion of the Bill is, "Here is a duty payable by law: Why take that away? Is it not a horrible thing to prevent a person paying what by law he ought to pay?" And yet when he came to the second part of the Bill he condemned that, "because," said he, "you are trying to relieve the small cure, and you are really doing that because you know the whole thing is a system which is utterly without defence." I do not know how the hon. Member reconciles the two statements, because really his argument upon the first part of the Bill entirely answers his argument upon the second; and *vice versa*, his argument on the second part completely answers his argument on the first. I may notice in passing that he conveniently omitted to mention, as far as the first part of the Bill is concerned, that it is strictly limited to those cases where the assessments have been on the valued rent, and that it is no more than allowing the legal perpetration of the system which has very largely obtained in Scotland owing to the good sense and generosity of those concerned. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, on the other hand, really treated this as a Committee point. He quoted the observations which I made last year, in which, speaking on the Bill of my hon. friend behind me, which provided that a bare majority might come to the conclusion, I urged him to amend his Bill so as to allow of practical unanimity being necessary. We take two-thirds of the value. I frankly admit that that is a Committee point, and one we should be perfectly willing to discuss in Committee, my general view on the subject being the same as last year, namely, that any measure which has any coercive effects ought to have something tantamount to practical unanimity behind it. Perhaps I ought to notice one other observation which fell from the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill when talking of this "indefensible system." He drew a moving picture of the change which had taken place in Scotch life and Scotch society, and he told us that in the old days heritors and parishioners were one and the same thing—that landowners and parishioners were the same. I never knew of such a state of society, and I have yet to read the history in which it is recorded. The hon. Member then went on to say that what more than anything else made him appreciate the injustice of the present system of Church assessments was the position of civic institutions and municipalities, and he specially instanced the case of the Glasgow Corporation, who, as he well knows, by a case which the Glasgow Corporation was unfortunate enough to lose not long ago, and in which both he and I took part, had to pay the assessment of the parish kirk session. He asked what good the Corporation got from the administration of the parish kirk session. Does not the hon. Member see that the logical outcome of that argument is that no corporation or public authority ought to be taxed at all? Does the Corporation of Glasgow give birth to any children who have to be educated, or does it have persons vaccinated, or does it matter to it whether the Registration Act is carried out or not? And so we might go through all the rates which are levied. With regard to the second part of the Bill, the hon. Baronet was very prodigal with the word "sham." He said—

> "This scheme is a sham, because you do not get the exemption unless an adequate sum is contributed by the kirk session, and there is no guarantee that the kirk session will contribute that money."

There, again, if that is a correct argument, all I can say in reply is that enabling legislation is always a sham, because——

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me. What I said was that the powers proposed were a sham, because everything which could be done under the Bill—everything which the Bill would enable the Church to do by voluntary subscription—could already be done without any Bill.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: My answer to that, with all respect, is that such is not the case. I do not think I am misrepresenting the hon. Baronet, but certainly one portion of his argument was that this was no real relief, because there was no adequate security that the kirk session in any particular case would find the money. If that is a strict argument, I say that all enabling legislation is a sham, because when you pass

enabling, as opposed to mandatory legislation, you have no absolute guarantee that the particular conditions will be carried out. Let me say just a word upon the actual provisions of the Bill. We have had some criticisms of the measure from my hon. friend the Member for Durham. Of course, I should treat the hon. Member very gently, because he is in the unfortunate position of a man with a nostrum of his own, and such people have always very tender feelings. What he has never been able to forgive us is that we did not bring forward a Bill founded on the resolution which he was fortunate enough to pass in, I think, 1884. I believe I can satisfy him that there is no real difficulty in the working out of the provisions of the Bill. The matter to which he rather took exception was that the assessment is not actually imposed, but only proposed to be imposed. The object of Section 2 is that the scheme shall be law before the parochial kirk session. In many cases we believe that will be an end of the whole matter, and that in many instances the entire sum, if it is not large, will be subscribed. Even if that is not so, when a proposal for assessment is made there is an opportunity for the kirk session to come forward and produce the sum which is necessary in order to get the exemption. But after all is said and done there is something else underlying the opposition to this Bill, and hitherto the most frank advocate of that "something" has been the hon. Member for West Fife. He was pretty explicit this year, but he was even more so last year. I should like to remind the House of one sentence which he uttered last year, because he then put in a shorter and more concrete form what he said this year. These were his words—

"The real object of the Bill was to get rid of arguments against the existence of an Established Church, and he was entitled as a supporter of disestablishment to object to the principle being whittled away in this manner, so that eventually when they were face to face with the great question of the Establishment there would be practically no Establishment at all." *

That is the argument of Demetrius. The hon. Member for West Fife says, "My craft is in danger." He cannot look forward with equanimity to the idea of having to fight a General Election in which he would no longer have a sore to rub in against the Establishment. I only hope that in the changed circumstances which we know are going to greet the hon. Member when he, alas! takes his energies and abilities, of which we are all so proud, to another kingdom, he may find the necessity of a grievance of the Scotch Church not so poignant as it has been hitherto. But really, when we come to discuss the argument underlying the opposition to this Bill, I can only ask the House whether the hon. Member's own description of the Bill as contemptible and small is not more rightly applied to the feeling which generates the opposition to an honest attempt to remove friction, simply because, in so doing, you would do away with a certain grievance.

MR. BIRRELL: I do not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but if there is one thing I detest more than another, it is keeping alive a grievance against a religious body simply for the purpose of using it as an argument against that body. The point I made last, and which I attempted, apparently unsuccessfully, to make this year, was that the principle of the Establishment is that the people who own the land in Scotland should pay for it, and I maintain that the principle should not be whittled away in order to remove objections which otherwise obtain to it. If they have an Establishment, let them pay for it.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The hon. Member must, I think, entirely appreciate that the whole point of our Bill has been to leave the principle as it is, and that the legal rights and liabilities after this Bill is passed will be exactly the same as they were before. In making that remark I may, perhaps, answer the hon. Baronet as to a matter which puzzled him. There is no intention in this Bill of taking away any right which a cure or a parishioner may possess, such as a right to a seat in the church. With respect to the hon. Member for West Fife, he has been, as he said, unsuccessful in making this point clear to the House both last year and this, because I honestly think he is trying to make a distinction where there is no difference at all. I do not think the principle of the Establishment consists in

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxx., page 649.

the necessity of exacting a tax which is legally due, even when the exaction of that tax may cause friction and heart-burning, and I cannot see that the taking away of that in any way hurts the principle of the Establishment. But I do understand the phrase which the hon. Member made use of when he said that he was entitled as a supporter of disestablishment to object to the principle being whittled away, so that eventually when we were face to face with the great question there would be no Establishment to deal with. I think this measure is one of a useful character, and I hope the House will agree to the Second Reading.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): There are two remarks in the speech to which we have just listened which certainly struck me as worthy of attention. In the first place, my right hon. and learned friend said that the passing of this Bill will remove a practical grievance. He was well aware that if he stopped there his argument would completely fail, and therefore he said it was to remove a practical grievance as the Church is administered. That is the whole thing. If the Church were to administer its affairs upon voluntary lines the practical grievance would disappear. But when the right hon. Gentleman proceeded he made a further most damaging observation in regard to his own plan, namely, that the legal situation of the parties will not be altered in any respect whatever by this Bill. If that be the case, I fail to see why the ratepayers of Scotland and the owners of land should be left to the will of the Kirk Session in the midst of their respective communities to know whether or not they are to be subject to the tax which by law is resolved to be laid upon them. The fact is, I oppose and object to this Bill for the simple and cardinal reason that it recognises and reaffirms the continuance of the assessment with which it deals, whereas I am in principle in favour of the total and immediate abolition of this assessment. It is futile to speak of the hon. Member for Durham as the patron of a nostrum. It is a nostrum which has been well known with reference to the whole doctrine as to civic establishment of religion and endowments. To promote religion by levying rates is not in my opinion any part of the duty of the State, and it is not a service, but a disservice, to religion itself. The same observation applies to a levy of rates for the purpose of promoting the convenience or saving the pockets of those who profess a particular style of religion or particular views as to Church government. We are being troubled with Bills of this kind simply because the Government, with this large majority at its back, is in power, and if we are to be troubled year after year by this kind of infatuation, by a Bill of this description, we cannot be complained against, and we must be forgiven if we feel ourselves forced to affirm and reaffirm the strong proposition which experience in Scotland proves, that wherever you find religion vital and sincere it can pay its own way. You may call this Bill what you like, but in the end you will find that it is this crucial consideration which comes into play. The fact is that this Bill is a Bill for the readjustment and the reaffirmation of a principle which is unsound and erroneous in itself. I entirely agree with the hon. Member for Durham that the right and only way to deal with the question is that that unsound and erroneous principle should go at once and for ever from the Establishment of Scotland and the membership within it. The mystery attending this Bill has not been at all cleared up by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He says that they are the enemies of the Establishment who oppose this Bill. If I mistake not, they are the very poor and the very unwise friends of the Establishment who have promoted the measure. Every man in Scotland must admire the efforts of the Church of Scotland on voluntary lines within recent years, but I very much doubt whether the rank and file of the membership of that Church would care to suffer the imputation of meanness which follows the proposition underlying this Bill, namely, that they are unable to pay their own religious way and to provide for their own religious duties as their fellow-Christians and neighbours in Scotland do. I do not desire to examine in anything like detail the provisions of the Bill. It is a very short measure, and its two main provisions are wholly bad and unjustifiable. No such measure as this will ever be of the slightest avail. The only method of dealing with the question properly is the cardinal and radical method of going to the root of the

injustice. I agree that there is only odium and discredit attaching to the imposition of this assessment, and I desire equally with hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to abolish that odium and discredit, but you can do that only by abolishing the injustice. When one looks at the details of the Bill one is instantly struck by the strangeness of the device which Her Majesty's Government have permitted themselves to use in Section 1. If there is one thing more than another in regard to the burdens on landed property that ought to be always kept in view it is that they should be fairly and carefully calculable from year to year, and that they should be imposed and varied, not by a private, but only by public authority. The first section of this Bill is in flat contradiction of that elementary rule. It is proposed that two-thirds of the valued rent heritors in Scotland may resolve to levy Church and manse rates according, not to the real rents, but to what are known as the valued rents. What is valued rent? At the present day valued rent does not represent value, and it in no way whatever represents rent. It is not a truth, but a fiction. It is a complete delusion and an anachronism. It does not represent, but misrepresents, the state of affairs as regards the lands, and the proposal of this Bill is to permit that at the will of certain of your parishioners in Scotland your property should be assessed, not in accordance with fact, but in accordance with fiction, not upon its present day value, but upon the value at which it and other property stood at the time of Oliver Cromwell. A more ridiculous and absurd proposal has seldom been placed before Parliament. The fact is that it is just typical of the struggle which has been going on in the minds of the Government. They desire to retain the assessment upon lands, but to conceal and hide it by manipulations of these valued rent provisions in Sections 1 and 2. Why do they not come boldly forward and say, "This grievance exists; it depends wholly and solely upon the power to raise these funds for religious buildings by means of rates levied upon all, whether they use or do not use the buildings"? Why do not Her Majesty's Government come forward and frankly say that the time for that state of things has come to an end, and that they must abolish the whole of this system and be done with it for ever? The uncertainty attaching to this assessment becomes even more marked under Section 3 of the Bill. That section no doubt marks an advance upon the provisions of the Bill of last year. The scheme of voluntaryism is much widened in this Bill, because the limit of value has risen from £20 to £50. But I ask this simple question: If there is to be any rate attaching to the land of the parish why should you give preferential treatment to certain of the owners of land in the parish? Why should you propose to make difference between ratepayers? According to the provision of Section 1 the resolution upon this subject is to be taken by the valued rent heritors. There are many parishes in Scotland in which the majority of the value is held by one landowner, and therefore we would have introduced into the parishes of Scotland the principle of "please the landowner," because if you please him he may vote that you, the real rent owner, should not be assessed, while if you displease him he will leave the law to take its course. You will be assessed according to the pleasure or displeasure of the largest landowner in the parish. If that be the way in which it is proposed to remove a grievance, I am quite sure you will remove the existing grievance; but you will only replace it by another of far deeper social effect. If you are going to address yourself to this doctrine at all, the House would do better to abolish the whole system under which it is possible to cause payment for these objects to be made by any other persons than those who share the benefits of the buildings, whether the manse or the ecclesiastical edifice itself. I would conclude by saying that I totally disagree with the view that the Church of Scotland or the people of Scotland are in favour of this proposal. It has been suggested in the course of this debate that the majority of the people of Scotland do favour this ridiculous proposal. We can judge of that only by the votes of this House. A similar measure to this was voted on last year, and in favour of it were eighteen Scotch Members, while against it there were twenty-nine.* Who, under these circum-

* For debate on Second Reading of the Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) Bill, 26th April, 1899, see *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxx., page 605. (Division List No. 102, page 659.)

stances, can claim that the opinion of Scotland is favourable to a measure of this kind? This is peculiarly a Scotch affair. In England the remedy has been applied. In Ireland the grievance is entirely unknown. Why then will you not permit Scotland to be governed in this particular in accordance with the voices of her representatives? If that were done I have little doubt of the result. The result would be the rejection of this measure and the total abolition and repeal of these duties. If these rates and duties were abolished I make free to say that the Church of Scotland would not be weakened, but would be greatly strengthened in the performance of its proper work, namely, its spiritual work.

*MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): Although I intend to oppose this Bill I offer it a hearty welcome, because, whatever it may or may not do, it is certainly a Disendowment Bill. The hon. Member for Durham says it marks a step in the direction of disestablishment. It should at least, however, mark the disappearance of the old argument levelled against us from pulpits and platforms, in which we were told that if we dared to lay a finger upon the property of the Church we were guilty not only of robbery, but of sacrilege. I hope such arguments are gone for ever. I see on the back of this Bill the name of the hon. Member for St. Andrews Burghs. I wonder what the fishermen of St. Andrews Burghs will think when they see the name of their Member of Parliament upon this Bill. I remember an election there in 1885 in which the hon. Member's father, whose memory we so highly respect, took part. That election was memorable in many ways. The polling day was on a Monday, and on the Saturday the Disestablishment candidate was told that a victory was sure. But between Saturday and Monday in Scotland there comes Sunday, and on that Sunday there came an eloquent minister down to St. Andrews Burghs from Edinburgh, and he preached a sermon upon the text "Will a man rob God?" He told those fishermen that if they voted for disestablishment they would share the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, and probably their judgment as well. Those fishermen fled from the wrath to come and also from the poll, and the Disestablishment candidate lost the election. Echoes of that sermon still disturb the equanimity of the fishermen on dark nights; and I wonder what they will say when they see their Member's name on the back of a Bill for robbing God. But it is not on those grounds that I oppose this Bill. I may comfort hon. Gentlemen opposite who are only trying their 'prentice hands at this wickedness that, although I have been cursed for the action I have taken, I am not any the worse for it. I am a member of the Established Church, and if hon. Gentlemen opposite produce any Bill which will benefit that Church, and which will do so without injuring the public I shall give it a hearty support. But I consider it my first duty to look to the public welfare. This is a Bill which, whether it benefits the Church or not, at any rate it does not benefit the public, for it not only robs the Church, but also the public, of part of its property. I maintain that the teinds and the ecclesiastical rates are not only public property, but they are public taxes. Those taxes are being applied according to the law of the country to the established Church of Scotland; they have been changed five times in their purpose, and many of us may live to see them changed a sixth time, but as long as they remain they are public property, and we should not allow them to be alienated or destroyed. In one of its clauses this Bill destroys them, and the rates on Dissenting churches and manses are to go. And why do you do this? It is not the rates that are unjust. It is perfectly fair that a Dissenting church or a Dissenting manse should continue to pay these taxes, but have you not the courage to say that the purpose to which they are applied is unjust and should be altered? And because it suits the temporary convenience of the Church you are obliged to forego these rates altogether. That is the first ground on which I oppose this Bill. But it is a measure which proceeds to its purpose in a disingenuous fashion. Why is it that you have picked out these manses and churches, and why are you going to take the rates off them? Why not take the rates off all Dissenters? You tell us that we are opposing this Bill in a mean way, to retain a disestablishment argument, but you are mean enough to remove these rates because you are trying to remove a disestablishment argument. Why do you

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

pick out those particular rates? I remember reading an essay by Leigh Hunt, in which he says that fishing would be perfectly impossible if the fish caught were to make a series of squeaks, because they would call down upon them the attention of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. You are now going to take the rates off those who squeak, but fill your basket with those that are silent. If you had a preamble, it would be, "Whereas it is now generally admitted that in principle it is unjust to put a tax upon a Dissenter to support the Established Church, and whereas the Church of Scotland gets a good revenue, and it is necessary to stop the mouths of those who make this a scandal, be it enacted." I will look at this Bill as a Churchman. Suppose I am capable of overlooking the defects I have mentioned, and I ask myself as a member of the Church—Will it do good to the Church? Not only will this Bill do no good to the Church, and fail to remove the scandal you wish to remove, but it will perpetuate and advertise it. If you want to put an end to the scandal of collecting these rates you can do it very easily without any Act at all. Why not raise a voluntary subscription? I never knew before that we required an Act of Parliament to allow us to raise subscriptions. If the right hon. Member will introduce an Act to put down public subscriptions I am sure it will be supported from both sides of this House. Under the present system, without any Bill at all, public subscription will work much better than this measure. In the first place, you are more likely to get it; and in the second place, you can apply it more cheaply, and you can deal with Dissenters according to the circumstances of the case. You may pick out one man who is noisy, and you may avoid another who pays quietly. I wonder if any hon. Gentlemen opposite ever attempted to collect subscriptions. If you attempt to collect money from your friends the first thing they do is to find an excuse for not giving anything. I have known friends of mine whose intellect I have held in contempt; when they have been asked for a subscription they develop a logical genius which entirely overwhelms me. That is what will happen in this case. Some Member will go among the congregation and ask, "Will you subscribe to pay off the feuars?" and the answer will be: "I understand you are going to relieve every man, great or small, rich or poor. I would have been willing to relieve small feuars, but not the rich." What will be the consequence? You are not forced by the Act of Parliament to raise this subscription, but you have to deal with people who do not read Acts of Parliament and who will say you have failed in your legal duty. For these reasons, as a Churchman and as a representative of the public, I shall offer a strenuous opposition to this Bill.

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said he would have preferred if the Lord Advocate had brought in a Bill to relieve entirely the real rent heritors, who are mainly feuars from Ecclesiastical assessment, for though the feuars were in the eyes of the law landlords, because they had a perpetual occupancy, yet they were tenants, because they paid a perpetual rent, and if they were relieved it would be a measure of equity. The proposal of hon. Members opposite was to relieve the landlords altogether and make them a present of a very large sum of money. The old Scottish legislators, who framed the Acts for maintaining the churches and manses and schools by assessment on the rent of land, were wise in their generation, and they did a great work for Scotland. If those who had framed the Acts originally had known that Scotland was going to make such remarkable progress, and that the rent of land in Scotland was going to increase by such enormous bounds, and that the population was destined to increase in the same way, they would have framed their enactment accordingly so as to keep pace with the prosperity of the country and the increase of the population, and this question would have automatically solved itself. Taking things as they were, they found that the landlords, the value of whose properties had been most increased by feu duties, had been very much relieved of their assessments by bringing their feuars into the same assessable clause, whilst those who had not reaped so much benefit had to bear the burdens unassisted. For those reasons he believed a more comprehensive measure would have been accepted not only by the Scottish Members, but also by the people of Scotland. He would strongly urge upon the consideration of the Lord Advocate the necessity of altering the Bill in this respect, because he

believed if this were done the measure would meet with general acceptance upon both sides of the House. He thought hon. Scottish Members opposite could not show their sympathy and good feeling to the Church of Scotland subject in a better way than by giving their cordial support to this Bill, and accepting it at least as a large measure of justice.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said that he knew it was somewhat perilous for an English Member to intervene in the discussion of a purely Scottish subject; but the exaction dealt with by the Bill was analogous to another exaction with which we were painfully familiar some years ago. English Church rates and Scottish Church rates appeared to him to differ only in this respect, that whereas in England the rates were appropriated to the maintenance of the churches and services, in Scotland they were applied to the erection and maintenance of churches, and also of manses, but not to the maintenance of services. Both systems, however, were bad, because they involved two things—one the employment of coercion for the maintenance of religion, and the other the taxing of one set of people for the support of the religion of another set of people. Considering the different ecclesiastical circumstances of Scotland from those of England, he was surprised that Church rates should exist there so long after they had been abolished both in England and Ireland. The history of the exaction in Scotland seemed as though it would resemble that of England. All sorts of compromises were proposed in England, but the result was that it was enacted that, while Church rates might continue to be made, nobody was to be compelled to pay them, and as a consequence Church rates, whether compulsory or voluntary, had ceased to be made. The Bill they were discussing was less absurd than that of last year, but still contained some absurd provisions. The abatement in the case of those heritors who were not assessed at more than £50 was to be dependent on the goodwill, or ability, of two-thirds of the heritors, and on the liberality, or want of liberality, on the part of members of the Church of Scotland; so that it depended on the collections on Sunday whether the full amount or not was to be paid on the Monday! The result would be a difference in different parishes, and even in the same parish; since what was voluntarily subscribed one year might not be subscribed the next. This Bill was an attempt to perpetuate an odious tax by making it a little less intolerable. Some of its opponents were to be bought off. The saddle was still to be on the wrong horse, but it was to be made a little less galling. He hoped that, if the Bill passed, it would increase the determination of the Liberals of Scotland to get rid of the exaction by abolishing the Establishment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 125; Noes, 83. (Division List No. 93.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Bethell, Commander
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbys.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Gl'sg'w)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Elliot, Hon. A. R. Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, Hn AGH (City of Lond.
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Edw Brodie (Hampst'd)
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Corn.)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)

Mr. Wylie.

Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Redfrew)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
Spencer, Ernest
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. Henry
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Channing, Francis Allston
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harwood, George
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, William Henry
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Lewis, John Herbert
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q.'sC.)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Crae, George
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
Maddison, Fred.
Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Montrose)
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Palmer, George W. (Reading)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
Wilson, John (Govan)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I object to this Bill being sent to the Standing Committee on Law. It is a matter of public policy which does not require any expert legal knowledge, and we ought to have the matter discussed in Committee of the House. Very few Scotch Members are on the Standing Committee on Law; I myself, for instance, am not on that Committee, and would not be appointed to it except by some kind of favour. There is this peculiarity about the Standing Committee on Law. Its members cannot possibly attend; they are Government officials and lawyers in practice, and the result is that the Committee must go hunting about for a quorum. What is the use of sending a Bill of this kind to a Committee which practically consists of English lawyers who do not understand the law relating to Scotland? There is not any great amount of business before the House;

we have nothing else of great importance to discuss. I do not think the Government can complain of the time taken up by the Second Reading, as every hon. Member was anxious to state his views shortly, and I do not think they have any reason to anticipate a long discussion in Committee of the House. If the Bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Law it will have to come back to the House on Report, and it may then be found that more time will have to be occupied on the Report stage than if the Bill were committed to the Committee of the whole House in the first instance. There are Members from Scotland on both sides of the House who understand the whole of this matter, and it should not be referred to a Committee of legal experts who know nothing about it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think it only right to explain the reasons which have induced the Government to suggest that this Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee on Law. It is quite true that the general principle of the Bill is such that it ought to be discussed in this House, but the general principle having been once decided, the details of the measure seem to me eminently of a kind which fit them for proper discussion in a Grand Committee, and which are more fitted for discussion in a Grand Committee than for a discussion in Committee of the whole House. The hon. Gentleman has stated that there are not many Scotch Members on the Grand Committee, and among other omissions that he himself is not a member. I believe there is a provision in our Standing Orders by which omissions of that kind can be remedied, and I have no doubt the Committee of Selection will take care that Scotch opinion shall be fully and adequately represented on the Grand Committee. Under these circumstances I would ask the House not to resist this Motion. The hon. Gentleman tells us that the business of the session is not of such an onerous character that we should send a Bill upstairs which ought to be discussed here. I have two answers to that; in the first place, it may turn out that the business may take more time than the hon. Gentleman thinks, and, in the second place, this is clearly a Bill for the Grand Committee. Its details are not of a kind which are interesting to the whole House, and I hope, therefore, the House will agree to the motion.

MR. COLVILLE (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I join in the protest of my hon. friend against this Bill being referred to the Grand Committee on Law. It must be remembered that only a short time was occupied on the Second Reading.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Second Reading having been now discussed, it cannot be re-opened even in Committee of the whole House.

MR. COLVILLE: If the Bill is committed to the Standing Committee on Law, only a few Scotch Members can take part in the discussion of its details. I strongly object to this proposal because it would debar the majority of the Scotch Members from discussing this Bill.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I remember in the case of a Scotch Bill which was recently sent to a Grand Committee, fifteen Scotch Members were added to the Committee on the ground that it was a purely Scotch measure. This is also a purely Scotch measure.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should look with great favour on any such course, but the composition of the Committee does not rest with me.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 100; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 94.)

AYES.

Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn Sir M. H. (Bristol
Bethell, Commander
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles

Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chath'm
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manch'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H. (City of L.)
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir J. Eldon
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Alexander
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Keswick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptfrd
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Frances Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Richards, Henry Charles
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Spencer, Ernest
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thornton, Percy M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph P. (Birm.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wylie, Alexander
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
Asher, Alexander
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Billson, Alfred
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Sir C. (Glasgow)
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Clough, Walter Owen
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalziel, James Henry
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Josph
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Lewis, John Herbert
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonald, Dr M. A. (Queen's C
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
Maddison, Fred.
Morley, Rt. Hn. J. (Montrose)
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Colville.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

LUNACY BOARD (SCOTLAND) (SALARIES, ETC.) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill. I certainly would have thought that a Bill which is of so purely a Departmental character, and dealing with a matter upon which necessarily the Scotch Office and the Treasury have what I may call semi-antagonistic interests, might have been allowed to pass without very much discussion. I believe that the Treasury, whose action in controlling other Departments we have heard so much of lately, would not have lightly lent themselves to a contribution to another Department, unless they felt the justice of the demand. But owing to the remarks that were made at the time when the resolution upon which the Bill necessarily proceeds was passed by the House, I feel that I should allow the possibility of the policy and motives of the Scotch Office to be misunderstood if I did not, what cer-

tainly would have been otherwise an unusual practice on such a Bill as this, make a speech in moving the Second Reading. The Lunacy Board of Scotland was constituted so long ago as the year 1857. Its duties were at once onerous and multifarious. In fact, the Board has the direction and regulation of all matters relating to lunatics and lunatic asylums in Scotland. Now, the constitution of the Board with its multifarious duties is as follows:—There are two paid Commissioners, who are both members of the medical profession; two Sub-Commissioners also members of the medical profession; and there are three unpaid members—one a lay member, who is the chairman, and two legal members. Besides these, of course, there is the secretary and a clerical staff. It is pretty clear as to what were the ideas of the Legislature in 1857, when the Board was constituted, as to what was the amount of work which would fall on the Board. The Act provides that there are to be two meetings during the year—one to be held in March and the other in November. With the amount of work necessary at that time probably these two meetings were sufficient. I may contrast that state of affairs with the state of affairs now, by dealing with the figures which I gave to the House already to-day in answer to a question of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty. In 1899, instead of two meetings of the Board, twenty-seven were held. There was a notion at the institution of the Board that perhaps after building the various asylums, and when the lunacy system had been put on a regular footing, there might be a possibility of economy by abolishing one of the paid Commissioners. Very soon, however, after the Board came into working order it was felt that that was quite impossible; and so long ago as 1870 a statement was made in the House of Lords in behalf of the Government of that day, which I may remind the House was not the predecessor of this Government. The Duke of Argyll said on 20th May, 1870—

"A vacancy happened the other day on the Board of Lunacy, and the Government, after full consideration of all the circumstances of the case, found it essential to fill it up. The work of the office could not have been done without its being filled up."

Now, when I say that the staff of the Board and the constitution of the Board are precisely the same now as in 1858, then I think the House will begin to see how enormously heavy the duties placed upon the Board are as compared with the duties at the time of its original constitution. Originally the salary of the Commissioners was £1,000 each, but in 1878 one of them had his salary raised to £1,100. That £100 was not an extra amount provided by the Treasury; it was docked from the salary of one of the Sub-Commissioners. Since then the salary of the Commissioners has been £1,000, as before, but rising by increments to £1,200. With regard to the way in which the work is done I give the figures for the three periods—1858, 1878, and 1898. The number of lunatics in asylums in 1858 was 4,028, and in private dwellings 1804; total, 5,824. In 1878, in the asylums 7,604, in private dwellings 1493; total, 9,097. In 1898, in the asylums 12,139, in private dwellings 2,767; total, 14,906. Those figures show that at the present time there are nearly three times as many lunatics to be attended to, and the staff now is the same as in 1858. Not only are the medical Commissioners bound by statute to inspect thoroughly every lunatic asylum twice a year—and in connection with this point I may say there are seven royal, fifteen district, and five private lunatic asylums—but it is their practice also to make a visit to every single patient in private dwellings. That is done twice a year, which means that over 29,000 visits are made by the Medical Commissioners, or, taking the asylums separately, over 24,000 visits. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark called attention the other day to what he called the disparity between the work done by the Commissioners of England and those of Scotland. He said there were six Commissioners in England and 100,000 lunatics, and in Scotland 12,000 odd lunatics and four Commissioners. That is not the fact; there are only two, and two Deputy Commissioners. The Deputy Commissioners have to visit the lunatics in private dwellings, to do which they have to travel through the length and breadth of Scotland. In 1858 their visits numbered 763; in 1878, 1,615; and in 1898, 3,690. Those visits take up the whole of their time, and it is impossible for them to do more than they do at present. They never have, and never will do any of the regular work of the

Medical Commissioners. It is a system which has no analogy in England, and therefore it is futile to compare the number of men engaged in the two countries. It may be a question which of the two systems is the better, but so long as the Scotch system is the system, it is absolutely necessary to have perfect inspection, and so long as you require to have that it is physically impossible to have less than two men. The time of the Commissioners is fully employed, and it is necessary to have more medical time, and the problem presented to us is how to get it. You may appoint another Medical Commission, but that would not be a more economical plan, because you could not get a Medical Commissioner for less than £1,000 a year. Then there is another objection, and that is the professional feeling of the medical profession, which is quite as strong as the professional feeling in the legal profession. No hon. Member who had an insane relative would like the relative to be entirely in the hands of a professional class. You would feel that you would derive some strength from what is called a lay element in the inspection. If a medical man were to be appointed the medical element would preponderate over all. The Medical Commissioners at the present, besides the visiting, attend once a month at the offices of the Board, where they are occupied in routine and administrative duties. If they could be relieved of those they would have more medical time available which could be occupied with these increasing demands. Now the lay element consists of a chairman and two legal members. So far as the chairman is concerned—the present chairman has occupied the position since 1888—he has attended meetings once a fortnight, and in 1889 he attended twenty meetings out of twenty-three. But his duties do not stop there; he is frequently at the office and has to deal with plans and sites of asylums and matters of that kind. In the same way the legal members have given excellent attendances at the board meetings, and if you are going to take away the attendance of the medical members the secretary must have somebody whom he can consult on matters of a quasi-legal nature. The hon. Member for Ross-shire suggested that the Law Officers of the Crown should do this, and suggested the raising of my salary for giving opinions to the Lunacy Board. But the Law Officers of the Crown are not meant to give advice of that kind. Their advice is available in matters of importance, but it is absurd to come to the Lord Advocate, who has to reside so many months in London, and expect him to act on the Lunacy Board in Edinburgh. That is the reason for this Bill. It is absolutely necessary that a greater provision of medical time should be made for this greatly increasing work, whether it is done one way or the other, and I personally and on behalf of my noble friend should be perfectly willing to throw that question on the floor of this House but for one circumstance. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark on the occasion when this question was last debated took upon himself to make a most offensive charge against my noble friend. I do not mince my words, because I think the charge was most offensive, and in order to show that I do not exaggerate I shall quote what he said—

"The hon. Member said he altogether differed from the Lord Advocate. The great object of the resolution was to provide salaries, not for the officials, but for certain of the Commissioners, who at the present moment by Act of Parliament were declared to be unpaid. Up to the present the work had been done gratuitously, and only now, when the chairman of the Board was a nephew of the Secretary for Scotland, did they propose to give a salary. This was the object of the resolution. He would not trouble the House with a division, but at every stage of this Bill it would be denounced as a job on the part of the Secretary for Scotland to give a salary to his own nephew, in a case in which public work had hitherto been done gratuitously."*

So far as public opinion is concerned I have not much fear, because a charge of that sort is easily settled by comparing it with the character of my hon. friend. If the accusation were put in one scale and the character of my hon. friend in the other, I have no doubt as to which would kick the beam. But such a charge ought never to have been made unless the hon. Gentleman had been certain of his facts. Had the hon. Gentleman said, "This is a bad policy, and I object to give a salary to a person called an unpaid Commissioner; I would sooner have a paid man and have done with it," it would have been one thing, but that was not the charge. He said this was a

* See speech of Mr. Caldwell, as reported in this volume, at page 142.

job to provide for a relative. It is just as well, when a charge of this kind is made against a gentleman, to see what the incentive is for which he is supposed to have sacrificed his honour. The provision in the Bill is that a sum might be paid by the Treasury, not to the Chairman alone, but to the whole three unpaid Commissioners, provided that in any year it does not amount to more than £500. Personally, I should have thought that a very inadequate sum to sell one's honour for in respect to a wife's nephew. But the point is, what right had the hon. Member to make any charge of that sort? It is all the more unfortunate when made by one who knows so well the forms of this House, that it was made on the Report, when the hon. Member knew that I had no right of reply. I am sorry to find myself obliged to make use of these expressions, because I recognise on many occasions the use that the patient industry of the hon. Member has been to the House. Why the hon. Member should have gone out of his way to make this personal imputation against the Secretary for Scotland, whose public life is as clear as anyone's possibly could be, I am at a loss to determine; but as it is, I put this Bill as a necessary measure before the House—necessary if we are to have a proper working of a very useful and efficient department.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read now a second time." —(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I shall deal with the last point of the right hon. Gentleman first. I daresay that what the right hon. Gentleman quoted as the expression on that occasion used by me is correct, and I quite felt at the time that it was a pity in a matter of this kind that a change of policy should take place when a nephew of the Secretary of Scotland was chairman. At the same time, if there is anything offensive in the expression I used I shall be happy to withdraw it, because the learned Advocate will bear me out when I say there is no animus between me and the Secretary for Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to the great amount of work that has been done by the Board of Lunacy in Scotland, and he read the Act of Parliament pointing out that two meetings should be held during the year. Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously mean to say that because the statute says two meetings shall be held in the year there shall not be more? I am surprised that the learned Advocate should have suggested such a thing. I think he overstepped the contention altogether when he compared the two meetings of the unpaid Commissioners in 1858 with the twenty-seven in 1898. When the two Commissioners were paid £1,200 you will find it was not contemplated that the work would increase after the five years, and the Commissioners' salaries were reduced to £1,000 when the Act got into working order. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the amount of work which had been done; all these things were done in England except the one small point of the visits to the individual patients. That is the only difference between the two Acts. Very well, suppose we knock out the two Sub-Commissioners altogether, what is the result? In England, with more than seven times the number of patients, you have six Commissioners; in Scotland you have two. In Scotland you have one-third of the Commissioners and one-seventh of the work to do. In Ireland, which is a little larger than Scotland, you have two Commissioners, and the net result is this. Scotland has proportionately more paid Commissioners for her lunatics than either England or Ireland. If, as the figures quoted by the Lord Advocate show, during a certain period lunacy has doubled, does it not show that you should, if necessary, have one paid Commissioner to do the work? Would anyone say that a layman could be of any service whatever in making these visits? And of what earthly use is his general knowledge of matters, compared with the technical knowledge that is required on visiting patients in asylums and in their own homes? The argument of the right hon. Gentleman is, you want more paid Commissioners, but employ people to do the work who have no qualifications whatever for the work. Then with regard to the proposals of the Bill. In Scotland there has never been any lack of men willing to perform public duties without seeking any consideration for so doing, and there is no comparison between the work done on the Lunacy Board and the work done by these gentlemen in other public services. The statute says there are to be

two Commissioners at £1,200, and two Deputy-Commissioners at £600, and the rest are to be unpaid; but now the right hon. Gentleman appears to think that it would be more economical to give those persons £500 a year than to have another paid Commissioner at £1,000. It is a question not of economy but of efficiency, and the Lord Advocate has not shown that we can dispense with the two head Commissioners. Does not the right hon. Gentleman know that every hour questions arise which require the Commissioner to be at his office in Edinburgh to answer? It is absolutely necessary that he should be at his office to advise the Board. Instead of these Commissioners you are going to have three unpaid men who are under no compulsion to attend. When Parliament fixes the salary of a man to perform a duty, the principle is that he is getting his salary and must devote his whole time to the work. With regard to the chairman, if the question had been ventilated in Edinburgh, I venture to say there would have been no difficulty in getting a gentleman to fill that office and that of the Commissioners. There never was such a body of men as the Scotch to rise to the occasion of the performance of public service, and when they stand and take an interest in matters connected with the country, they retain the interest of the people by whose votes they are elected. It has not been shown that it is necessary to make a new departure of this kind, and I maintain that public duty is better performed by the man who acts from a sense of public duty than by the man who always looks for his fee for his attendance at the meeting. This Bill is not to give a salary to men to devote their whole time to these duties; they are to get a fee for their attendance, and they all go to the office and put their names down more for the purpose of securing the fee than from a desire to do the work. Now who are these Commissioners? One is Sir John Cheyne, a man who obtained his knighthood from the Tory party; he is Procurator to the Church of Scotland, and a man who gets every appointment going where there is any money attached to it. He is Sheriff of Renfrewshire, for which he gets £1,000 from the Consolidated Fund. Do you expect a man like that, an advocate in practice, a sheriff with £1,000 a year, and plenty of work for which he is highly paid, to give his services for nothing. The other Commissioner is Mr. Cowan, the county agent of the Liberal party, another one of the mercenary gang who, in the hope of getting into office again, makes no charge for his services to the Board. These are the men appointed to this Board, the chairmanship of which is to be brought down to the level of those of public and bogus companies. I object to this proposal on this ground, that it is not right where you have, as in the case of Scotland, two paid Commissioners and two Deputy-Commissioners, and a secretary at £600 a year, and a clerk at £320, to pay anybody else for advisory work. Lawyers are not needed there, because if the Lord Advocate is in London he is not the only Crown officer, and the Solicitor General is at Edinburgh at the Crown Office, and he is much better qualified to give advice than an advocate like Sir John Cheyne or a county agent. If you come with a new Commissioner and ask for the money for his salary we will support you, but we will not establish such a precedent as this. Such a system once established will not end with this Board; once you give effect to this principle you cannot prevent it extending to everybody in the county councils, and so forth. If a crofter, for instance, has to travel many miles to attend a meeting—assume that he has to spend £1 and travel for three days—ought you to give that poor man, who is glad to do his duty without seeking support from the State or ratepayers, something for his expenses? The First Lord of the Treasury was asked the other day whether he intended to extend the principle to the county councils, and he said no; but once it is begun you will have it creeping into every part of Scotland. How could the Lord Advocate come here and ask for this without touching the question of the secretary's salary? For shame's sake he could not have done so, and he sweeps away by his action the old-standing clause that the salary shall not exceed so much, and leaves it to the Scotch Office to give as much or as little as it pleases. The secretary of the English Board gets £1,000, and the secretary of the Scotch Board £600; but in England the secretary has seven times the work to do, and he must be a barrister of seven years' standing, and is qualified to take the position of law adviser. In Scotland you have

a man who is not a barrister at all, but who has risen in the Civil Service, and £600 is ample salary for him. If you made it compulsory that he should have legal training and be qualified to take the position of legal adviser, I would not object to your raising his salary; as it is he is overpaid, and ought to be satisfied. But we should never have heard of the increase in his salary had it not been for the fact that this £500 is to be divided amongst this mercenary crowd. I think the House should say let them go. Let the Board be filled with men of public spirit, and let Sir John Cheyne and the whole gang go. I beg to move as an Amendment that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty), in seconding the Amendment, said the House had been invited to accept the Bill as a Bill of a departmental character without discussion, but it should be one of the duties of Scottish Members in this House to watch and if necessary criticise the work of the Scottish Office. They were sent by their constituents for that purpose, and not to please the Lord Advocate, however much they desired to do so. Compared with the work of a county councillor, the work of the paid Commissioners was very light. The House was informed that the paid Commissioners had to attend to complaints and listen to grievances, but members of the county councils had to do the same, yet they asked for no remuneration whatever. He would be sorry for Scotland if she had sunk so low that she could produce no patriotic man to fill the position of chairman to this Board without what was termed by the right hon. Gentleman payment by fees, but which he preferred to call tips. He did not believe Scotland had fallen so low as that, and he would be glad to know what means had been taken to obtain a chairman. Plenty of men would have come forward if proper announcements had been made in the press. The two unpaid Commissioners were lawyers, and if their tips came to £200 each, only a miserable £100 was left for the chairman, who was expected to devote much of his time to the business. If the work had so much increased then another man should be found, who should be paid a salary for the work he was expected to do. If this proposal were once adopted it would have to be extended until in the end all the members of every public body in Scotland would have to be paid. An objection to the scheme was the amount of other work which these proposed Commissioners already had to do. Sir John Cheyne is a sheriff, and it is said he is also Procurator of the Church of Scotland. He might be engaged in connection with either of these positions at the very time when his assistance was required on the Board. The principle was entirely wrong, and if work was required to be properly done, the only system was to pay a salary to a suitable man to do it. He opposed the Bill, which in its present form he contended ought to be scouted by every Scottish Member.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): This is not a very important measure, but I rise to say that I shall not be able to vote for it. The Bill has been denounced as a job, and it has been pointed out that if anything in the nature of a job were contemplated something more heroic than the present proposals should have been brought forward. But no one who knows the Secretary for Scotland would for one moment suspect him of jobbery. Unfortunately, however, there are people who do not know the Secretary for Scotland personally, and to them this Bill must wear something of the aspect of a job. But it is not on that ground that I oppose it, but on the ground that the provision which is made for a change in the department concerned does not seem to me to be of a thorough character. Officials holding the important posts mentioned in the Bill should be either paid or unpaid, but this measure proposes to create an official who is neither the one nor the other. If, as the Lord Advocate pointed out, and I think he made out his case, there has been a great increase in the amount of work with which the Department has to deal, that is a strong ground for creating another paid post in the Department, and I, for one, should have been very glad to vote a sufficient salary

for the purpose. But the present proposal to give some £300 to the Chairman and £100 to each of the unpaid Commissioners seems to me to be giving £500 where it is not wanted, and so far as I can see is not likely to bring any adequate return.

SIR T. GIBSON-CARMICHAEL (Edinburgh, Midlothian): I did not have the pleasure of hearing the Lord Advocate's defence of this Bill, but I have gathered from subsequent speeches the line he took. I listened with delight to the eloquent speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark. He elaborated certain points which pleased me very much. He said he did not know very much about Scotch affairs, but he proceeded to show that he knew a great deal about the affairs of the Lunacy Board. I was Chairman of that Board for some years, and although I may know as much as, or more than, the hon. Member claims to know of Scotch affairs, I will not claim to know so much of the affairs of the Lunacy Board. What knowledge I have, however, comes from personal experience, whereas his knowledge, as far as I can make out, comes from hearsay. With regard to this Bill I may say at once that I differ from the hon. Member for Mid Lanark in one matter. He said that what this Bill is intended to carry into effect was never desired until the present Government came into power. I was not appointed Chairman of the Lunacy Board by a Tory Government, and certainly there was no idea that any part of my composition was Tory, but I may say that at that time it was the feeling of members of the Board that something in the nature of the first clause of this Bill was most desirable. I think the clerical staff might be improved, although I do not believe the individual members of that staff could be bettered. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark suggests that an advocate would be better as Secretary of the Board. Perhaps I do not know so much about advocates as he does, but my own opinion is that we are very much better off with a man who is not an advocate. Our secretary has always discharged his duties most efficiently, but it always struck me that the clerical staff were very much over-burdened in the way of work. The Act under which the Board was formed was passed in 1864, and the work has increased very much since then. At the time of my chairmanship there was a report wanted with regard to the increase of lunacy in Scotland. Apparently the Members of this House wanted to know whether the increase of lunacy was due, as was said in the case of England, to the increased consumption of whisky, or whether, as was said in the case of Ireland, to the increased consumption of tea. It was not long before the members of the Lunacy Board made up their minds that it was due to neither the one nor the other, but in consequence of the clerical pressure it was some time before we could supply the report in the form in which this House required it. I believe that the Government by passing the first clause of this Bill, at any rate, would be doing a good thing for Scotland. But why is that clause, together with the third, confined to the secretary and the clerks? There are other persons belonging to the Lunacy Board, such as the paid Commissioners and the Deputy Commissioners. They may be adequately remunerated—possibly they are; if the Government tell me so I shall believe it. But their work has increased quite as much as that of anyone else. In the year 1864, when the present system began, these Commissioners had to visit the lunacy establishments of Scotland as they do now. They then paid 4,930 visits in the year. That was the work remunerated as Parliament thought fit in 1864. In 1898 these men for the same remuneration had to pay 15,671 visits. If you make a change at all, one class should be treated the same as the other, and, perhaps, it would be better to leave them to the tender mercies of the Treasury to provide whatever remuneration was thought proper. As to the second clause, which, perhaps, is, after all, the important clause, as it is not proposed to be retrospective, I do not feel very much affected by it. I believe the lawyers, the sheriffs, and the Crown Agent are extremely useful. They used to turn up at the meetings and give advice on technical matters, which I certainly could not have given to the medical members of the Board. There was no compulsion on them to attend the meetings; but I, as chairman, should have been very sorry if they had

not come. I cannot say, however, that I ever heard them complain about not getting a salary. It has been asked why they should be paid, seeing that the legal members of the Prisons Board are not paid. The position is quite different. The legal members of the Prisons Board are *ex officio* members of that Board, and therefore it is part of their duties as sheriff or Crown Agent. If the Lord Advocate assures us that the lawyers of Scotland are not willing to discharge these duties without payment, I suppose we must swallow the clause. You must have lawyers on the Board, because matters arise which only a lawyer can deal with. But with regard to the chairman, I confess I do not feel so happy. I mean to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, but I am not convinced that the chairman should be paid. When I was invited to occupy that position the motive which actuated me in accepting the office was that I thought it an honour to be connected with the administration of Scotland. I think it would be a pity if that tradition were broken, and I therefore hope the Government will reconsider the point so far as the chairman is concerned. You can hardly give these lawyers less than £250 apiece, or if you cut them down to £200 you have only £100 left to be given, as has been said, in occasional "tips" to the chairman. I do not think you will obtain a better chairman by that means. On the contrary, it is my firm belief that on either side of politics you will always be able to get men to do work of that sort without pay.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.): I rise for the purpose of expressing the hope that the Government before this debate is brought to a conclusion will give us some further light upon the proposal in the second clause of the Bill. The speeches which have been delivered to-night have been principally addressed to the provision in the second clause. There is almost unanimity in regard to the first clause. We all wish to see the paid officials of the Lunacy Board, whether they are paid Commissioners or Deputy Commissioners or clerks, given adequate remuneration, and I am quite sure that all who represent Scotland in this House will feel that there is much to be urged in favour of the first clause of this Bill. It is only when we come to discuss the provision of the second clause that there seems to be ground for difference of opinion. What I regard as the unfortunate feature of the measure is that it seems for the first time to propose the partial payment of those connected with public offices in Scotland. It is unfortunate, not only in regard to the specific proposal in the second clause, but also because of the effect it will have upon the whole of our representative system in Scotland. What we want to secure for public offices throughout Scotland—a large proportion of which are unpaid—are the very best services that can be obtained in the country. Even in regard to the proposal itself, the £500 is so inadequate, having regard to the duties to be performed, that in place of being a benefit to even the three gentlemen who have been alluded to to-night, it will be absolute injury, and especially will it be a great injury having regard to the manner in which it will affect the whole question throughout Scotland. I hope some member of the Government will tell us, before a division is taken, that in Committee some proposal will be made, either to change the form of the proposal and to appoint another assistant Commissioner—because that seems to be what really is needed—or else to get rid of one of the legal advisers. I have no doubt that two legal advisers to a public board of this kind are rather a stumbling block than otherwise. Doctors differ, and no doubt legal gentlemen differ as well. If you removed one of the legal officers from this Board and put another medical officer upon it you would make a desirable change. I enter my protest, so far as this clause is concerned, against this proposal for partial payment. I think it is the most serious feature of the Bill, and on that ground I would urge the Government to reconsider this portion of their measure.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I venture to say that this proposal has placed the whole of the Scotch Members in a very difficult position. As

the hon. Member has just remarked, there seems to be very little difference of opinion with regard to the first clause. There is practical unanimity in regard to the increased payment for the overworked clerical staff at present engaged. It certainly puts us in a somewhat ungracious position that we should feel ourselves forced to vote against the measure, because such a course of action may be interpreted as being in a sense adverse to those officers whose services we desire heartily to commend. But I cannot help thinking that the second clause is the whole point of the Bill. The proposal is a great administrative change. It proposes to introduce into Scotland a new system, but we have had no proof whatever from the Government that such a change is required. The statement which has more than any other affected me with regard to the course I should take in the division is the statement of the hon. Member for Midlothian, who was, as we know, a most able, industrious, and efficient chairman of a Lunacy Board in Scotland. No one more able ever occupied that position. We have his testimony on the floor of the House of Commons that a salary for that office is not required, and that you can get public men who will gladly devote themselves to to that sphere of usefulness without fee or reward, and that he sees no distinction between serving the State in that capacity and serving the State as chairman of a county council. This Bill proposes to make this great administrative change, but I am bound to say that I think his testimony was completely against the suggestion. I desire to add one remark with reference to another officer on that staff—namely, the sheriff. He at present holds the position, practically, of constant or occasional adviser in administrative matters. The point I desire to make is that the sheriff is a fairly highly paid official already, and I look with some apprehension upon a proposal to make offices of this kind, which at present are subsidiary to the administrative functions thrown upon the sheriffs, a ground and occasion for adding to their salaries as sheriffs of counties. The chairman does not require this salary; the sheriffs are paid already; and with regard to the third officer I do not know the grounds upon which the change is proposed. Therefore, while I have every sympathy with the officers mentioned in the first clause of the Bill, I feel myself bound, in face of this large administrative change, to vote against the measure.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick): I am very glad that on the occasion of the discussion of this important matter we have the presence of the First Lord of the Treasury. It seems to me that a large question of principle is involved. I need hardly say that I entirely repudiate all the suggestions of jobbery or of improper motives which have been made. I am certain there is nothing whatever of the kind. But it is an entirely new principle which is being introduced in this proposal for the partial payment of a man who takes an honourable position connected with the public service. For many of the affairs of life this system of partial payment is doubtless an admirable system. In regard to companies, where the directors are only expected to give a small amount of attention to the concern, I think the payment of a reasonable amount of remuneration ensures that attention being given. I do not know any precedent for this system either in Scotland or in England of paying such salaries to men who only give a certain amount of time to the work. I hope the Government will pay some attention to this matter on larger grounds than merely Departmental considerations. I do not want to vote against the Second Reading, but I hope the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give this point their careful attention when the Bill comes on for discussion in Committee, because the second clause raises an important point to which I am not prepared to assent.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): The hon. Member for Partick has called attention to the unusual character of the payment proposed to be made to these men. I should like to know from a representative of the Treasury whether there is any precedent in the public service for payments of this character. There is the sum of £500 a year to be

distributed amongst three gentlemen in accordance with rules to be laid down by the Treasury, and it is to be distributed in any proportion which the Treasury may choose. They may fix upon the custom prevailing amongst public companies if they like, or they may distribute it as they please. As far as my knowledge goes there is no precedent for any such mode of payment in the public service, and I do not think that this is a desirable innovation to introduce into the public service. I agree with hon. Members who have spoke in favour of Clause 1. If it is the case that the Departmental work has considerably increased in recent years, then I think there should be more clerks employed. Since the Lunacy Board was instituted in Scotland in 1864 it has had only four chairmen. The first chairman was Mr. Forbes Mackenzie, who held office for about six years; he was followed by Sir John Don Wauchope, who was succeeded by the hon. Member for Midlothian; and then came the present chairman. All those gentlemen who held office down to the present time discharged their duties most ably and without any remuneration, and without ever making any demand for remuneration. I remember that when the administration of this Board was inquired into in 1870 Sir John Don Wauchope stated in evidence that when he was invited to become the chairman he was told that there was no remuneration, and that he might attend to the duties just as he pleased. He discharged the duties of chairman very ably for a great number of years, absolutely without any remuneration whatever. Is there any reason whatever why a chairman should now be paid, when during all these years this Board has discharged its work so admirably—for it has been one of the most admirably managed Boards in Scotland for administrative purposes? I do not know the gentleman who has been offered this appointment, and I have no doubt he will discharge his duties well. But there is no demand that he shall do more than his predecessors, and the same argument applies to the other unpaid members of the Board. My hon. friend has stated that we are introducing a substantial alteration into the constitution of this Board, and the Prisons Board has been alluded to. The Fishery Board contains one paid member, a sheriff, and a scientific member, and also one or two others to represent the local fishing interest. The sheriff, who has as much legal work as is proposed to be given to legal members under this Bill, does his work free, and no demand has been made either by the present holder or any of his predecessors for remuneration for legal work. I understand that the Lord Advocate stated that the two legal members of the Lunacy Board said they could not continue to discharge their work unless they were paid.

Mr. Buchanan.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: No, no!

*MR. BUCHANAN: Upon that subject I am left somewhat in the dark, for I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that there would be great difficulty in getting these legal duties discharged unless they were paid for.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I explained that a very great increase of work had been cast upon certain members of the Board, and the only way to meet it was to rearrange the work. This rearrangement will cast an increased amount of work upon the legal members, and it is for that increase that we propose to make this payment.

*MR. BUCHANAN: I am much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for that explanation, for it makes the alteration proposed on the Bill greater than I anticipated. I understood that there was a difficulty in getting efficient legal members to discharge the duties of the Board, and I do not believe, as a matter of fact, that there are not members of the bar in Edinburgh eminently capable of discharging these duties who would be willing to discharge them, like their predecessors, entirely free of remuneration. The Lord Advocate now says there is going to be an alteration in the distribution of the duties and the administrative functions of this Board; the duties discharged by Assistant Commissioners in future are to be discharged by the legal members

the Board, and for that they are to be paid. I venture to say that this does not appear to me to be an improvement of the distribution in the administrative functions of the Board. If the ordinary work of the Board has increased the proper way to deal with it would be to appoint a new Assistant Commissioner or a Commissioner. These are the men who really do the work, and if the work has increased why not appoint another man of the same calibre and qualifications to do the increased work and not throw that work upon legal gentlemen and pay them a very inadequate salary? The First Lord of the Treasury might possibly be able to respond to the appeals made from his own side of the House and from all quarters. Whilst we are all in favour of taking any steps and voting any money to increase the efficiency of this Board, we are not prepared to commit ourselves to a Bill framed in this way which will give remuneration to gentlemen who, in past times, have discharged those duties without salary, and we are not prepared to agree, without further inquiry, to the suggestion of the Lord Advocate that increased administrative duties are to be put upon the shoulders of men who are not specially qualified to discharge them. I think we ought to have some intimation from the First Lord of the Treasury, or from some member of the Government, that they do not intend to proceed with Clause 2 as it stands, and that they are willing to modify it to meet the general views which have been expressed.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said he desired to associate himself with the objections which had been raised in regard to Clause 2. If this Bill was carried out in its entirety it would initiate a new method of paying officials which would be unsound finance. They were perfectly willing to pay well for services which they got, but they had also taken a pride in Scotland in doing their public business in an economical way. He hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would state exactly what he intended to do to meet the objections which had been raised, and spare them what was always a disagreeable task, namely, that of voting against the Government.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I am sorry that no member of the Government has found it necessary to respond to the appeals which have been made from their own side of the House. I should like to pay a tribute to the Scottish lunacy administration, which is not excelled by the lunacy administration either in England or Ireland. Both in England and Ireland they have followed Scotland in the many improvements which the Scotch Lunacy Commissioners have carried out. Experts have come over from America to see our Scotch lunacy administration, and they have testified to its success. If this administration is to be strengthened, it should be done in a proper manner. I feel sure that if the first clause of the Bill were to be put to the vote it would be agreed to unanimously. The Lord Advocate, on behalf of the Scotch Office, has said that it is necessary for the efficient administration of this Board that the salaries should be increased, and that if we wish further to strengthen the administration we ought to do it in the way suggested by the hon. Baronet opposite and others, by increasing the expert branch of the Board. The Lord Advocate said the number of private patients had doubled within the last few years, but it is not the slightest good sending these patients anything but experts who can give evidence and report upon the condition of these patients. The Board ought to be strengthened in its administrative capacity, and the money should be paid to secure the best men that can be got. In Scotland we are under a considerable disadvantage as compared with England in the way our medical officers are paid. In Scotland the salaries of medical officers were limited by statute in 1864, but so recently as 1890 the medical officers under the Lunancy Commissioners in England were placed in a different position by statute, and there is now no restriction to their salaries in England. Though the grievance is not touched and does not arise specially under this second clause, we are in Scotland under considerable disad-

vantage in respect to payment given to the medical officers who are employed by the Lunacy Commissioners. Exception has been taken to the second clause on the ground that it introduces the principles of payment for public work. My objection does not take quite the same form as that which has been expressed by some hon. Members who have spoken in this debate. My view is that if you cannot get men without paying them you ought to pay them well. As a matter of fact, I am not sure that we should be doing a useful public service by introducing this system of payment by a far greater degree. The payment proposed under this clause is entirely inadequate, for the proper payment of gentlemen who are to discharge the duties of Commissioners is certainly not £500 a year. No one can contend that this is either adequate or proper payment, and on the ground that it is too small there is a valid objection to the proposal made in this clause. If the Lord Advocate had come to us and said the administration had broken down, and that there should be a radical change of system approximating to a Government department, it would have been a different matter. If you once depart from the principle hitherto adopted with regard to the Lunacy Commission, you will have to go a good deal further than is now proposed, and you will have to pay the members of the Fishery Board and other Boards in Scotland. In my humble judgment this proposal is not warranted by the facts, and I hope the Government will not insist upon passing the Bill with this very objectionable clause in it. After the appeals which have been made to the First Lord of the Treasury and the Government by hon. Members opposite—to which there has hardly been a dissentient voice—I think it is a very great pity that more respect is not paid to the experience and to the opinions expressed on both sides of the House.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: When I made my statement in support of this Bill there were very few Members in the House. I explained that an enormous amount of increased work had devolved upon the Board. I said that I thought my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland would have been perfectly willing to leave it to the House of Commons to determine whether there was a case for having a new official in some form or other, or whether we might not pursue what would be a more economical plan, by so rearranging the duties as would fix more work upon the unpaid members. I also explained that really our hands had been tied by the attacks which had been made upon my noble friend. I was glad to see that the hon. Member for Mid Lanark expressed some regret that he did make use of the words he used in attacking my noble friend, and I am glad to notice that any charge of that kind has been conspicuously absent from this debate. Of course, that puts the matter on a very different footing. If I understand that the views to which I have alluded do not in any way prevail, then I am quite sure that I am not doing too much when I say that I will take upon myself the responsibility of bringing before my noble friend the views which have been generally expressed upon this question as a matter of principle. I am perfectly willing to do that, and in the light of the remarks which have been made, my noble friend will consider the situation, and see if it might not be more prudent to provide for the extra assistance in another way. Upon that understanding I hope the House will grant the Second Reading, because, whatever the ultimate decision of the Secretary for Scotland may be, hon. Members will have another opportunity of challenging it. Undoubtedly there is much in this Bill upon which we are absolutely unanimous, and I hope the House will now agree to the Second Reading.

MR. CALDWELL: After what the Lord Advocate has said, I beg leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I have put down a small Amendment to this Bill on Clause 5, which I hope will be accepted. The clause applies to deserters who come back into the service, and by their good conduct have their desertion overlooked. I think any person who really knows the character of a soldier will agree with me that the commanding officer ought to recommend the case before the Secretary of State gives the man back his pay. I do not want to stop the man getting his pay, but I think the commanding officer is the right man to make the recommendation, and I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 18, after the word 'may,' to insert the words 'on the recommendation of the man's commanding officer.'" — (*Mr. Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I am afraid that I cannot accept the hon. Member's Amendment, but I may point out that under the clause as it stands at present it is quite impossible that the view of the commanding officer can be overlooked. I think it is most important that this power should lie in the hands of the Secretary of State, and I think this view will be accepted by the Committee. I may point out to the hon. Member that his Amendment would place a restriction upon the exercising of the prerogative of mercy by the Secretary of State of an invidious character, because this clause refers also to fraudulent enlistment, which he will have full power to forgive. Nothing has been more gratifying to me during the present war than the way in which the men who have deserted have come forward. I hope the hon. Member will not insist upon this Amendment. Under Section 79 the Secretary of State has power to forgive; and how illogical it would be if this Committee were now to lay down less merciful treatment.

MR. WARNER said he thought there was a difference between fraudulent enlistment and simple desertion and coming back, because a man sometimes got something by fraudulent enlistment. On the understanding that the commanding officer would be consulted, he begged to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said that the clause only referred to Section 161 of the Army Act, and that section had only reference to cases of fraudulent enlistment, and to only one kind of fraudulent enlistment, namely, where a man had three years good conduct service; and the section said that such a man should not be tried for the offence, but it also said that his prior service should be forfeited. That referred to fraudulent enlistment of a limited kind. It was perfectly true that under Section 79 there was power both as to desertion and fraudulent enlistment, but as the matter was presented by the Under Secretary of State for War he was perfectly correct in saying that the clause did not do what the Under Secretary said it did.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am prepared to recognise anything, now that the hon. Gentleman recognises that this Amendment is properly drawn by the legal advisers of the War Office.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) had upon the Paper the following Amendment—

"In page 3, after Clause 2, to insert the following Clause: 'The provisions of the Army Act, enabling marine officers to sit on courts martial ashore, shall in future be extended to courts martial on marines afloat.'"

*THE CHAIRMAN: The new clause standing in the name of the hon. Member for Devonport is out of order.

MR. KEARLEY: On a point of order, may I state that my Amendment has been already moved in Committee on this Bill. I do not wish to argue with the Chairman, but on the occasion to which I refer a distinct pledge was given that this particular Amendment would be accepted at a later stage. It was in 1891, and the Amendment was moved by Mr. Pope Hennessey in the identical terms in which it now appears on the Paper, and the First Lord of the Admiralty of that day gave a pledge that the Amendment would be accepted in some form. The present Speaker of the House on another occasion, when a similar Amendment was moved on the Second Reading, said that it could not be discussed then, but that it could be dealt with when the Bill was in Committee, and the First Lord of the Treasury rather supported my contention. I merely wish to justify myself for having put the Amendment on the Paper on the present occasion.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I have very carefully considered this question. I do not think because an Amendment escaped the notice of a Chairman in one year, that therefore it is in order for all time. On the occasion to which the hon. Member refers, the First Lord of the Admiralty pointed out that the Amendment could only be received as an Amendment to the Naval Discipline Act. I have examined the other precedent referred to by the hon. Member, and I cannot find that it supports his contention.

Clause agreed to.

Schedule:—

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked whether any provision would be made for better sleeping accommodation for soldiers when billeted. He would also like to know what sort of breakfast an innkeeper would provide for 1½d.

MR. WYNDHAM: The question is hardly one to be raised on the Schedule of the Army (Annual) Bill. The schedule places upon innkeepers an obligation as to prices, and it would be most inconvenient and almost impossible to discuss now so large a question as whether the British soldier is or is not fed as well as he might be.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said he did not know what breakfast an innkeeper could provide for 1½d. per head. He did know that Lockhart's would only provide a cup of coffee and a slice of bread and butter for that sum, and it seemed to him that soldiers on the march required something more substantial than that. The Government were now asking the working classes to join the Army, and when that was the case Tommy Atkins should be treated more liberally than he had been in the past. The British soldier was only paid 1s. 3d. per day, whereas the colonial soldier received 6s. 3d. a day. That was no encouragement for an Englishman to join Her Majesty's service.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. CALDWELL said he desired to take the opportunity of impressing once more on the Under Secretary of State for War the necessity for having the Army Acts consolidated. The original Act was passed in 1881, and since then it had been more or less amended almost every year. There was a peculiarity with regard to the Act. In 1885 it was provided that in all future printings of the Army Act the Amendments should be incorporated. The result was that the copy which was printed as the Act of 1881 was not the Act as it stood in the Statute-book, but as it appeared in the Queen's printer's copy with

the Amendments inserted by later statutes, which was very inconvenient. Suppose the War Office supplied a copy of the Army Act two years ago; that would appear to be the Army Act of 1881, and if it happened to get into the hands of an officer on a court martial he might read it as the Act of 1881. Some Amendments had, however, been made on certain clauses and it was no longer the Act of 1881. The printer's copy contained the alterations which successive Parliaments had made, and it was exceedingly inconvenient to have a printer's copy purporting to be the Act of 1881, which really was not the Act passed in 1881, but an Act passed in that year which had been amended by subsequent Acts. It was almost impossible to put down an Amendment to the Army Bill without going through every Act passed since 1881 to see whether a particular section had been already amended. He himself had had to go over every Act since 1881 in order to make sure that Section 161 had not been amended. That was very inconvenient, and he thought the time had come when the Act should be put on the Statute-book as it now existed. There was no difficulty whatever in having the statutes consolidated, and if that were done it would be a great advantage.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has put two different proposals before the House without distinguishing between them so clearly as to convey to hon. Members not familiar with the facts that they are different. He has suggested the consolidation of the Army Acts, but in another portion of his speech he seemed to point to the re-printing of the Act from time to time, so that no officer might act on a copy of the Act of 1881 in ignorance of the fact that it had been amended. Dealing first with the question of re-printing, the hon. Member said that he himself had some difficulty in following up the various Amendments, and he threw out the suggestion that some officer of the Army administering this Act might perhaps be guilty of a miscarriage of justice. I do not think that would be the case, because every officer on a court martial is bound to be guided by the Manual of Military Law, which gives the Act as amended, and also indicates the purport or effect of the Amendments, so that any such miscarriage of justice is impossible. I am quite ready to admit that the case for the consolidation of the Army Acts is a very strong one. It is a case which of necessity grows stronger year by year, and is now very strong indeed, and I am prepared to join with the hon. Member in a pious aspiration that the Acts may soon be consolidated.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) asked if the 430,000 troops mentioned in the Bill included the colonial and Volunteer forces in South Africa as well as the Volunteer forces in England.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have already given the details four or five times. The number mentioned includes the troops borrowed from India, the colonial forces, the Volunteers and the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa, but it does not include the Volunteers in this country.

Question put, and agreed to; Bill read the third time, and passed.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL. [Lords].

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight) said the Bill was the same as that introduced last year. It proposed that instead of the judge of the Palatine Court being in receipt of fees his salary should be fixed by the Lord Chancellor with the concurrence of the Treasury, and that the jurisdiction of the Court should be fixed by Her Majesty in Council. The practice of the Court would also be assimilated to the practice in other Courts. The fees now amounted to about £2,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time."—(*The Attorney General.*)

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked, was it usual to fix the salary

of a judge before the office was created. Under Clause 6 Her Majesty in Council would have power to extend the jurisdiction of the Court, and he believed that it was the intention that that jurisdiction should be considerably extended. He thought both the salary of the judge and the jurisdiction of the Court ought to be fixed in the Bill.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): This is one of those English Bills the full effect of which is not apparent from merely reading it. The Attorney General has not given the House very much enlightenment. He did not state, for instance, that the first clause took away from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners all responsibility with reference to the Court of Palatine. It is important that we should know if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are to be relieved of the arrangements which, at present, obtain, because they got the property in Palatinate for the purpose of paying the salary, and they have, as a matter of fact, paid that salary down to the present time out of the funds which they received. Will the Ecclesiastical Commissioners be able to appropriate these funds for the general purposes of the Commission or otherwise? No doubt, some bargain has been struck between the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Treasury, and the House is entitled to know what that bargain is, in regard to this judge's salary. The House of Commons is asked to pass a Bill leaving it to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Treasury to fix the salary. That is the confidence trick; and it is asking too much of the House. I may say I had not the remotest idea that this Bill was going to be run on to-night. It is very unfair that we should be started on a Bill of this kind when nobody expected it to come on. I know something generally of the matter, however, and I am hardly ever taken much at a disadvantage. Now, we come to Clause 3, which is the most extraordinary that could be put into a Bill. It says that the salary of the judge shall be of such an amount as the Lord Chancellor may, with the consent of the Treasury, direct. Now the Court of the Palatinate is equal to the Common Law Courts, and is therefore a Supreme Court; and yet the salary of this Supreme Court judge is not fixed by this House as are the salaries of other Supreme Court judges. That is a most extraordinary thing. The next section provides that at the expiry of any period of five years the Lord Chancellor, with the like concurrence of the Treasury, may vary the said salary with reference to any variance in the amount of the business of the Palatinate Court. It is an extraordinary thing to say that the salary of a Supreme Court judge may be varied. I always thought that the salaries of judges were fixed by statute, and that they could not be reduced, so that the judges might hold their office without fear or favour. But no; this judge is to be paid according to his work, and his salary may be either increased or reduced according to the variation in the amount of business in his court. In that way if a judge wants to keep up his salary, he must keep up the business of his court. If he lets down the business of his court by dispensing justice in half an hour instead of lingering over it for two hours, he will find his salary reduced at the end of five years. I think that is an extraordinary thing to put into an Act of Parliament. These two clauses are quite sufficient to justify us in saying that a Bill of this importance should not be sprung upon the House at twenty-five minutes to twelve, and read a second time. But the Bill goes further. It is a Bill to extend the jurisdiction of the Court. The jurisdiction may be extended, it says, by the Queen in Council. I think it is not a very usual, and not a very appropriate thing that the jurisdiction of the Law Courts should be left to the haphazard Orders in Council. The jurisdiction should be fixed by Act of Parliament. Who knows about Orders in Council? Where can you get them if you go to search for them? Everyone knows about an Act of Parliament, and nobody can be excused of ignorance of an Act of Parliament. Nobody but an expert lawyer knows anything about Orders in Council, and if you ask an expert lawyer he would charge a fee for it. I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

POLICE RESERVISTS (ALLOWANCES) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

*MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek) moved to leave out Sub-section 2. This sub-section raised a very important question. It provided that the local authority, such as the Standing Joint Committee in Counties, was to be liable to give compensation to police Reservists who were wounded in the war. His own council had passed a resolution to the effect that, inasmuch as the constable could not be regarded at the time he joined the colours as in their service, the gratuity should be provided out of the military funds and not out of the police funds. Now the position of a police Reservist who was severely wounded would be worse under this sub-section than if he had been injured at home while on duty as a policeman. He wanted to know whether the gratuity under the sub-section would be in addition to what would be granted by the War Office, or in substitution for it. If the gratuity was the only sum that was to be awarded in compensation for disablement or death, then it ought to be very much increased. He did not think when a policeman gave up his position at home and went abroad to fight for his country, he should be put in any worse position in case of injury than if he had remained in the police force. Then if the money was to be paid wholly out of local funds municipal corporations would refuse to employ Reservists, and that would be a great disadvantage to both the Reservists and corporations.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 4, to leave out Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Bill.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2) stand part of the clause."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): I hope my hon. friend will not press this Amendment. I would point out to him in regard to the burden that is to be thrown on the municipalities, that it is quite permissive. Some local authorities have already granted the gratuities, and unless we pass this clause, these grants would be illegal. The grant of the local authorities is quite independent of what comes from the War Office.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said, on behalf of his hon. friend the Member for West Renfrew, he begged to move the Amendment standing on the Paper. The clause as it at present stood was, he thought, liable to doubt.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 8, to leave out the words 'if he returns to' in order to insert the words 'in the event of his reinstatement in.'"—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I hope my hon. friend will not press this Amendment. No doubt there may be a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of these words; but in framing this Bill we adopted the words of the Act of 1890. There is a question of sentiment in the matter. It is said that when you reinstate a man there is a feeling that he has done something that was not quite right; but that if you speak of him as returning to the force, it takes away from the idea of reflection upon him.

MR. PARKER SMITH said he was satisfied that the matter had been brought before the attention of the Home Office.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill reported. As amended, to be considered on Thursday.

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (MILITARY SERVICE) BILL.

As amended, considered.

Amendments made.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 24, after the word 'of,' to insert the words 'or arising out of.'"—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

NAVAL RESERVE (MOBILISATION) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said he confessed he was extremely surprised that the Second Reading of a Bill of this great importance should be moved at about three minutes from twelve o'clock. As no explanation of the Bill had been given from the Government side of the House, it would be necessary for him to give some explanation of it.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

SUPPLY [30TH MARCH].

Resolutions reported:—

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1900-1901.

CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £29 000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for expenditure in respect of Royal Palaces and Marlborough House."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £73,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1901, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Resolutions agreed to.

COAL MINES (PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR UNDERGROUND) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time and passed.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

BOILERS' REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION.

The Select Committee was nominated of—Sir William Arrol, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Galloway, Sir Edward Gourley, Mr. Hazell, Mr Heath, Sir Alfred Hickman, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. M'Ghee, Mr. Penn, Colonel Pilkington, and Mr. Renshaw.—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

NEW BILL.

EXECUTORS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the Law of Executors in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Renshaw, Mr. Ure, Mr. Orr-Ewing, Mr. Caldwell, and Mr. Dewar.

EXECUTORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law of Executors in Scotland, presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 166.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:

Southport Extension and Tramways.

Stockport Corporation Tramways.

Hartlepool Gas and Water.

City and South London Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

DORKING WATER BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL [H.L.].

The Queen's consent (in right of her Duchy of Lancaster) signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with amendments.

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES GAS BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

The order made on the 8th of March last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged.

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

FALKIRK AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

GUN BARREL PROOF ACT, 1868, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

IMSCHENETZKY'S URALITE PATENT BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE WATER BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

EDUCATION BOARD PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (BRIGHTON AND PRESTON UNITED DISTRICT, ETC.) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1899, to enable the school boards for Brighton and Preston United District, Liverpool, Plymouth, Salford, and Willesden to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts—Was presented by the Lord Privy Seal (V. Cross) for the Lord President (D. Devonshire); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners (No. 47.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Telegrams from Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War reporting—

1. A telegram addressed by him to the State Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic in reference to the abuse of the white flag; and

2. The reply of the President of the Orange Free State.

INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom, including employers' associations, trade unions, boards of conciliation and arbitration, and workmen's co-operative societies.

LABOUR STATISTICS.

Sixth Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1898–99.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT, 1894.

Return as regards Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1899.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Local Registrar of Bankruptcy in Belfast, professional or other peculiar

qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the public service are requisite. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) (No. 43.)

COAL MINES (PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR UNDERGROUND) BILL. (No. 44.)

ELECTORAL DISABILITIES (MILITARY SERVICE) BILL. (No. 45.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed.

COPYRIGHT BILL [H.L.],
AND
COPYRIGHT (ARTISTIC) BILL [H.L.].

The evidence taken before the Select Committee to be printed for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 46.)

PARIS EXHIBITION—SUNDAY OPENING.

LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the British Commission of the Paris Exhibition are justified in making regulations which will practically compel British exhibitors to open their exhibits and transact business on Sundays, with the alternative of having their exhibits taken out of their control; whether Her Majesty's Government will support the United States Government in attempting to secure the non-exhibition of goods on Sunday. I believe I am correct in saying that in the previous exhibitions in 1867, 1878, and 1889 there was no compulsion on British and American exhibitors to open their stalls on Sundays. But in connection with the forthcoming exhibition a new departure has been made, for Rule 19 of the General Regulations for British exhibitors provides that—

"All exhibits must be on view on every day on which the exhibition is open. If exhibitors or their representatives do not wish to be in attendance at the exhibition on Sunday, the Royal Commission will be prepared, if specially requested, to undertake the superintendence of the exhibits on Sunday, on terms to be arranged, but in that event the Royal Commission will not be responsible for any loss, damage, or accident, however occasioned."

The first portion of this rule seems fair enough, but your Lordships will at once see that exhibitors would have great objection to handing over their property to strangers on Sundays, especially when it is provided that in the event of loss, damage, or accident, however occasioned, the Royal Commission will not be responsible. Many exhibitors feel that there is a principle involved, and that to compel them to open their stalls and transact business on Sundays is a great hardship. I understand that American exhibitors have represented to their Government that it is undesirable that they should be forced to open on Sundays contrary to their consciences, and that representations have been made by the United States Government, but I have not been able to ascertain with what result. I thought the matter of sufficient importance to ask Her Majesty's Government whether such a representation as I have indicated could not be made.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): The Royal Commission have been fully informed of the views taken by the noble Lord, and by those who sympathise with him; but I need hardly tell him that we have no shadow or shred of authority in the matter, and that it is entirely for the authorities at Paris to determine what they will do. The objection which they have to the practice of shutting up a certain number of exhibits on Sunday is that the general appearance of the exhibition—and, of course, it is in its essence an exhibition—will be very seriously injured, and they do not think they are bound to encourage such an arrangement. Of course, we are in face of the fact that on this subject opinions of the most diverse character are entertained, and I think the opinions that are prevalent in France are not precisely sympathetic with those of the noble Lord. All that we can do we have done, which is to represent the fact that a great objection exists amongst certain exhibitors on the subject, but for the result of those representations we can be in no way responsible.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely :—

Southport and Lytham Tramroad Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely :—

Lincoln Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL (QUEEN'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).

Read the third time, and passed.

MARKET WEIGHTON DRAINAGE AND NAVIGATION BILL.

Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

BRAY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (EXTENSION OF TIME).

Petition for Bill; referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Committee—

1. "That, in the case of the Portland Urban District Gas Petition, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

2. "That, in the case of the Halifax Corporation Bill, Petition of the 'Elland-cum-Greetland Gas Company' for dispensing with Standing Order 129 in the case of their Petition against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

3. "That, in the case of the Metropolitan District Railway Bill, Petition for additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision, if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

Resolutions agreed to.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP F).

Mr. SCHWANN reported from the Committee on Group F of Private Bills, that the parties opposing the Devonport Corporation Bill had stated that the evidence of Robert Vigers, of 4, Fredericks Place, Old Jewry, E.C., was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Robert Vigers do attend the said

Committee To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.

Ordered, That Robert Vigers do attend the Committee on Group F of Private Bills To-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Linlithgow; Newburgh; Glasgow; and Perth; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE).

Petition from Leicester, against adoption; to lie upon the Table.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Petition from Acton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF SALE) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of Free Church of Scotland Temperance Committee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Norwich and Charlton Kings; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL).

Petition from Hammersmith, against adoption; to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY BILL.

Petition of the National Poor Law Officers' Association of England and Wales, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

MONEY LENDING BILL.

Petition of the Incorporated Law Society of the United Kingdom, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSES (SCOTLAND) LATER OPENING BILL.

Petition of the Free Church of Scotland Temperance Committee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) BILL.

Petition from Keighley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1895) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Aberdeen, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Haddenham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Radcliffe; Brampton; Bolton; Reading; Bedford; Chorlton-cum-Hardy; York; Portsmouth; Wandsworth; Sunderland (twenty-three); Wolsingham; Hartlepool; and Walton-le-Dale; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (eighteen); and London; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Chester-le-Street; Bedford; York; Chesterfield; Reading; Portsmouth; and Radcliffe; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 13th March, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Local Registrar of Bankruptcy in Belfast, Professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2393 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT).

Copy presented, of Sixth Annual Abstract of Labour Statistics of the United Kingdom, 1898-9 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF TRADE (LABOUR DEPARTMENT) (DIRECTORY OF INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS).

Copy presented, of Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom, including Employers' Associations, Trade Unions, Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration, and Workmen's Co-operative Societies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 6th February; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125.]

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Forty-second Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, being for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 31st March, 1900, giving effect to a Rule of Court [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1900-1901) (FINAL FIGURES).

Copy ordered, "of Statement showing the Revenue and Expenditure for 1899-1900, and the Estimated Expenditure for 1900-1901."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.]

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TRANSPORTS—RETURN.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he can state when the Return (Transports, South Africa) will be ready.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Return will not be ready for some little time.

EXPLOSIVE AND EXPANSIVE BULLETS.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the date when Mark IV. ammunition was withdrawn, so far as Colonel Plumer's force is concerned, was early in January; and whether at Mafeking Colonel Baden-Powell has any other sort of ammunition left except Mark IV.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): In reply to the hon. Member, I can only give the dates and character of the orders which have been sent to South Africa. The general officer commanding was told on the 15th July to use only Mark II. ammunition for mobilisation, and on 17th October he was told to send home all Mark IV. and Mark V. ammunition in the command. We have no information of the date on which this order took effect in each part of South Africa.

MR. FLYNN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the statement as to this ammunition was made by an officer at the front?

[No reply was given.]

MR. FLYNN: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the second paragraph.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes; I think the answer to the first paragraph indicates the inability to answer the second.

MR. FLYNN: Are we to understand that the statement with regard to Colonel Baden-Powell is wrong?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member knows that we cannot communicate with that gallant officer.

FEMALE NURSES WITH THE TROOPS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state the number of qualified female nurses engaged in the war in South Africa and their pay per day; whether any qualified nurses offered their services gratuitously; and, if so, how many; and whether they were accepted.

MR. WYNDHAM: The total number of nurses employed in South Africa is

514, at rates of pay varying from £30 a year, with allowances, in the case of the Army Nursing Service, to two guineas a week in the case of those employed locally or accompanying invalids home. About 2,000 applications for such employment were received, but no record has been kept to show how many offered their services free of charge.

HORSE TRANSPORT SUPPLY OF VETERINARY STORES.

MR. FABER (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in the case of the steamship "Goth," of the then Union Line, which started for South Africa on or about the 21st January last, with about 240 horses on board, one of the horses developed pink eye shortly before the ship started, when it was discovered by the veterinary officer in charge that there was no veterinary medicine of any kind on the vessel; whether there was time to procure the necessary medicine before the ship started, and if so, whether it was procured, and, whether any, and how many, of the horses died during the voyage; and will he state whose office it is to see that vessels carrying horses from this country to South Africa, in such cases, are properly supplied with veterinary medicines and appliances.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member has been misinformed. The Inspecting Veterinary Officer landed the horse, which was suffering from influenza. The vessel was amply provided with veterinary medicines and appliances by the Army Veterinary Department. This has been done in the case of every transport. No information has yet reached the War Office to show whether any horses died during the voyage.

MR. FABER: Who was the veterinary surgeon in charge?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not the officer's name. I believe there were two, one being selected by the Imperial Yeomanry Committee.

ARMY CONTRACTS—BOOTS.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether boots or shoes supplied for the troops have been condemned; and, if so, whether they were goods supplied by others than the usual contractors to the War Office.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): There are always a few rejections of boots and shoes; but not more than usual have been rejected since the war pressure began, and there has been no general condemnation of any supplies on account of bad quality. I must add that the boots for Yeomanry and Volunteers have not been ordered through the Army Clothing Department.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): Can the hon. Gentleman state what proportion of these Army boots are obtained from middlemen like Messrs. Samuel, mentioned the other day?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: No, Sir; I cannot tell. The Volunteer commanders give their own orders. The person who contracts for Army orders must be the person who actually supplies the boots.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether the Lord Chancellor has taken any steps with regard to the case of Edwin Underwood, a justice of the peace for the county of Middlesex, who has recently been involved in the improper execution of War Office contracts.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The answer to the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative. I am not in a position to say more on the subject.

WARM CLOTHING FOR THE TROOPS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the War Office has issued a notice stating that articles of warm clothing are specially required for the troops in South Africa, and asking that contributions should be made for this purpose; whether, inasmuch as under the conditions of the present campaign the wear and tear of the soldiers' clothing has been very exceptional, it is the intention of the War Department to require the men to replace

the worn out and deficient articles at their own expense; and whether, as the exposure to cold will be exceptional, owing to the troops being actively employed in the field at a great altitude in the winter season, and the House of Commons has refused no request for funds to properly supply the troops with all requirements, he will cause the men to be supplied with such warm clothing as the climate requires at the public expense instead of appealing to their friends for contributions.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must refer my hon. and gallant friend to my reply to a question put by the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire on the 26th of March.* All necessary articles are supplied by the War Office and replaced as required.

ARMY COMMISSIONS FOR COLONISTS.

GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can inform the House whether the offers of 110 commissions in the Army to the Australian Colonies and 44 to the Dominion of Canada are intended as a recognition of the services rendered to the Empire in South Africa by the Australasian and Canadian troops; and whether it is intended to increase the number of commissions to be offered to Canada so that the people of the Dominion may be afforded, in proportion to population, the same opportunity of rendering military service to the Empire as is to be afforded to their fellow subjects in Australasia.

MR. WYNDHAM: The numbers of commissions are approximately as stated in the question. If all the commissions offered to Canada are filled, the Secretary of State will be quite ready to consider a further offer.

RIFLE COMPANY MOUNTED INFANTRY, 4TH CAVALRY BRIGADE—DISBANDMENT.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, with regard to the case of the Rifle Company Mounted Infantry 4th Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot, who received an order on 1st February last to be prepared for embarkation at the shortest notice, and on 15th February were ordered to proceed by special train from Aldershot to Royal Albert Docks and embark on the transport "Sicilian" for South Africa, and shortly afterwards received orders not to proceed to South Africa on account of sickness amongst their horses, whether the officers of the rifle company had to provide themselves with outfits at a cost of £90 each; whether this company has now been broken up and the outfits have therefore become useless; and whether, under these circumstances, the War Office will reimburse the officers for the money expended on their outfits.

MR. WYNDHAM: This company had to be broken up on account of infectious disease. But the officers have been selected for employment in South Africa, and their outfit will not therefore be wasted.

MR. JEFFREYS: Have all the officers been so selected?

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that that is the case.

EMPLOYMENT OF VOLUNTEER OFFICERS AT TERRITORIAL DEPOTS.

MR. CORNWALLIS (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that many of the depôts of the territorial regiments are denuded of officers, he will encourage the officers of the Volunteer battalions to offer their services at these depôts.

MR. WYNDHAM: It has been decided to employ Volunteer officers temporarily at regimental depôts.

YEOMANRY TRAINING—OFFICERS EXPENSES.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in Yeomanry regiments heavy charges fall upon the officers for the expense of things necessary for the efficient training of their men, and for the necessary management of the squadrons and troops, amounting in some cases to £120 or £150 a year upon each commander of the two or three troops that compose a squadron, with additional charges upon the one who acts as squadron leader; and whether he can see his way to some of these charges being borne by the public, as, for instance, the rent of rifle ranges, the cost of the increase of practice ammunition, and of

* See page 312 of this Volume.

prizes necessary to encourage good shooting, the rent of places in which to keep troop stores, and the carriage of those stores from regimental headquarters to the troop centres.

MR. WYNDHAM: As my hon. and gallant friend is aware, special allowances are being given this year to meet the expense of the special training. But I must ask to reserve all questions of permanent reform.

RE-ENLISTMENT OF MILITIAMEN—BOUNTY PAYMENTS.

GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the importance of encouraging the re-enlistment of time-expired Militiamen, he would reconsider the arrangement under which the bounty of £5 now offered is paid on the assembling of the battalion, and would give authority for it to be paid at the time when the enlistment takes place.

MR. WYNDHAM: Experience has proved the advantage of delaying the payment until the man appears at the training; the hon. and gallant Member's suggestion cannot, therefore, be adopted.

FOREIGN SERVICE RIFLES.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the Small Arms Committee last sat to consider the respective merits of the loading arrangements of the service rifles adopted by America and the leading European Powers.

MR. WYNDHAM: Specimens of the rifles adopted by foreign Powers are obtained whenever possible and at once tried.

MR. HEDDERWICK: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the Committee sat at all on the American rifle?

MR. WYNDHAM: This Committee is a branch of the War Office; it is a Standing Committee. I have not the information as to the American rifle.

ARMY VETERINARY DEPOT.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can explain why the result of the examination, held in September, 1899, of officers of the Army Veterinary Department has not been published.

MR. WYNDHAM: No candidate succeeded in passing the required test. The usual list of successful candidates could not, therefore, be published.

BRITISH ARMAMENTS CORPORATION.

MR. HOWELL (Denbigh Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the formation of a company, called the British Armaments Corporation, for the manufacture of guns and projectiles, and whether any officials of the War Office have any connection with the company or have officially expressed any opinion as to the undertaking; and whether, in view of statements made in connection with the flotation of the company, he can state whether the Government is in any way interested in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: Nothing is known of the existence of such a company or of the issue of any prospectus with the view to the formation of such a company. The hon. Member appears not to be aware that any member of the War Office, whether civil or military, who purchases shares in such a company disqualifies himself from retaining his appointment under the War Office.

PICRIC ACID.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the attention of the Admiralty and War Office has been directed to the desirability of establishing the manufacture of picric acid within the United Kingdom.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The desirability of encouraging the production of picric acid of British make has been kept constantly in view ever since it was adopted as a warlike store. With the exception of a small quantity recently ordered to meet present urgent demands, all the supplies obtained for both land and sea service have been manufactured throughout in this country.

NAVY—PENSIONS OF SEAMEN AND STOKERS.

SIR E. T. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Ad-

miralty whether, with regard to the new Admiralty Order for the enrolment of seamen and stokers leaving the Royal Navy on the expiration of their first period of service, the pension will be the same as that of the men who enrol for a second engagement, or only in accordance with the age now applicable to the Naval Reserve; can he see his way in conjunction with the new Order to make the age for pensions the same for both branches of the serviee; can he state the number of seamen, and also of stokers, who have declined engaging for a second period during the past five years; and whether, seeing that men who serve for a second period leave when only about forty years of age and under, he will endeavour to enrol these also in the Reserve.

MR. GOSCHEN: The Order referred to by the hon. Member is merely a circular to the Fleet to draw attention to the conditions of service in the Royal Naval Reserve, for which men who leave the Navy at the end of their first period of engagement, or who purchase their discharge, are eligible. The conditions as to pensions in the Royal Naval Reserve were not affected by the circular. The answer to the second question is in the negative. In regard to the third question, I will refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth on the 2nd March last.* The Admiralty have a lien upon all pensioners under the age of fifty-five years, who are liable to be recalled for service in case of emergency, and provision is already made for enrolling in the Seamen Pensioner Reserve pensioners who volunteer and are physically fit. I may add that I am now engaged in considering a further scheme for enrolling in a Reserve seamen and marines who leave the service before the expiration of their time for pension.

NEW NAVAL 12-INCH GUN, MARK IX.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, as stated by the chairman at a recent meeting of the Vickers Company, the Admiralty have bought a new gun, to be called Mark IX.; and, if so, whether any such guns are yet in use; or, if not, from what date it is expected that they will be mounted in the ships of the Navy.

MR. GOSCHEN: The statement of Mr. Vickers, as quoted in *The Times* refers to the new pattern 12-in. gun. This pattern has been approved for some time. A considerable number are under order and several have been delivered. None are yet in use. The first ship which will carry this gun is the "Formidable," which should be ready for her guns during the present year.

NAVAL ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—STOREKEEPER GENERAL.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): On behalf of the hon. Member for Bedford, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is intended to fill up the post, which will shortly become vacant, of Storekeeper General of Naval Ordnance by the appointment of one of the officers who were transferred to the Naval Ordnance Department from the War Department in 1891, or from any other source.

MR. GOSCHEN: It is premature to put such a question, as the period of service of the present Storekeeper General of Naval Ordnance will not expire for some time.

DELAGOA BAY ARBITRATION.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any sums have been spent or incurred by Her Majesty's Government in respect of the Delagoa Bay arbitration.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): No, Sir. No sum has been expended and no liability incurred.

JAMAICA—BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA.

MR. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Bank of Nova Scotia is issuing notes in Jamaica; whether these notes are legal tender, and, if so, by what authority; and whether he can give the terms as to limitation of amount and security which have been imposed on the Bank of Nova Scotia; and whether it is open to anyone on payment of a licence fee to issue notes in Jamaica or any other Crown colony, or whether legislation is required before they can do so; whether the Jamaica Legislature has passed any such

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., page 1524.

legislation; and, if so, whether it has had the sanction of the Colonial Office.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I am informed that the Bank of Nova Scotia is issuing notes in Jamaica. Such notes are not legal tender. So far as I am aware no special limitation as to amount or security has been imposed on the bank in Jamaica. Such limitation is, however, prescribed by the law of Canada by which the bank is bound. I am advised that in Jamaica bankers may issue notes on payment of the licence fee prescribed by law, and that no legislation is required to empower them to do so. As to other colonies the law of each colony must be considered, and no general answer can be given. I may add that this matter, which is a very technical one, is engaging further consideration.

CHINA—"OPEN DOOR" POLICY.

COLONEL MILWARD (Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is intended to distribute Papers relating to undertakings given by Great Britain and other Powers to the United States with reference to the open door policy in China.

*THE UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The proposals of the United States and the reply of Her Majesty's Government to them are included in the Blue-book just laid before Parliament, pages 303 and 381. We have received from the United States Government the answers made to them by the other Powers. They have been published at Washington, and they will be laid before Parliament at once.

CHINA—BRITISH GUNBOATS IN THE WEST RIVER.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (York, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the gunboat "Sandpiper" is ashore near Samshui, on the West River, and badly damaged; and, if so, what steps are being taken to ensure the effectual patrol of the river for the protection of British steamers against piratical attacks; and whether he can now give the House any information as to the Chinese reformer reported to have been abducted from Hong Kong and taken to Canton.

*MR. BRODRICK: We have not heard of any such accident to the "Sandpiper." Kwong Yu-pui left Hong Kong for Canton on the 26th ultimo, but returned to the colony on Friday last.

FINANCE BILL—STATISTICS OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will lay on the Table an amended financial statement of revenue and expenditure, actual and estimated, for the year 1899-1900 and 1900-01 in the place of the provisional figures in paper No. 8 presented on 5th March, so that the particulars may be in the hands of Members before the Third Reading of the Finance Bill; and whether in such statement will be indicated the estimated excess of receipts from the anticipation of the revenue in the year just concluded, and the diminished estimate of revenue consequent thereupon in the present financial year; and whether the war expenditure will be distinguished from the normal peace expenditure.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I promised to place before Parliament as soon as possible after 31st March the actual figures of the revenue and expenditure of the year 1899-1900, in substitution for the provisional figures in the Paper presented on 5th March. This will be done to-morrow, if possible, and the expenditure due to the war will be distinguished from the ordinary peace expenditure. Hon. Members will be able to judge, by comparing the actual receipts from Customs and Excise with the amount at which these receipts were estimated on 5th March, how much the revenue of 1900-01 has been anticipated. In moving the Third Reading of the Finance Bill, I will give to the House the details of the receipts which are usually given in a Budget speech, and explain in each case how my estimates of revenue for 1900-01 have been affected by this anticipation. I will also explain any variation in the estimates of expenditure.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: What I ask for is not merely the actual figures

for the year just concluded, but the estimated revenue and expenditure for the current year. I want the statement to be exactly on the lines of the provisional statement, but that it shall apply to the present condition of things.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The statement will be identical with that placed in the hands of hon. Members before every Budget is introduced. As to the figures for the coming year, I cannot give them before Friday, for the simple reason that the financial year has only just ended, and there has been no time to calculate what effect the anticipations will have on the revenue of this year in connection with the new taxation. I will, however, give the House all the information I can on Friday.

BURIAL DISPUTE IN WALES—CASE OF DAVID VAUGHAN.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a recent incident in the Vale of Clwyd, in reference to the burial of David Vaughan, who died at the Ruthin Workhouse, on 12th February last, at the age of 72; whether he is aware that the action taken by the rectors of Bodfary and Llandyrnog in regard to this burial has formed the subject of discussion at meetings of the Ruthin Board of Guardians, and that Vaughan was a member of a highly respected family residing in the parish of Aberwheeler (which is attached to the parish of Bodfary for burial purposes), that he had himself resided in this parish for sixty years of his life, and that his father and mother and sister were buried in the Bodfary churchyard, but that the rector of Bodfary refused to allow him to be buried there; whether he is aware that several non-parishioners have been buried in this churchyard for whom burial fees were paid, and that, upon a decision being arrived at to bury the man in the churchyard of Llandyrnog parish, the rector refused to allow the hearse to go outside the boundary of the parish for the corpse, that this hearse was provided by public subscriptions of the parishioners in 1895, and has on other occasions been sent outside the parish for burial purposes; and whether, in view of the feeling aroused by such incidents, he will consider the desirability of so amending the law relating to parish churchyards as to give parishioners more effective control over the burial of the dead.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The Secretary of State had not previously heard of this case; but from inquiries which have been made it appears that the whole difficulty arose from a doubt as to whether the deceased could properly be regarded as a parishioner of either of the parishes in question. In the particular circumstances of the case there seems to have been reasonable excuse for the doubt; and in consequence the rector of Llandyrnog did not feel himself justified in sending out of the parish the hearse which had been provided for the use of parishioners only. The incident does not appear to call for an alteration of the law.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEES—FEMALE MEMBERS.

MR. JEBB (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Board of Education would grant a Return of the number of women serving on the respective Technical Instruction Committees of County and County Borough Councils and on Committees under Clause 7 of the Directory.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): If the hon. Gentleman will move for such a Return it will be granted.

THE NEW EDUCATION CODE.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that certain higher grade and other schools are seriously affected by the proposed changes in the Education Code for 1900; and whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared, either by a Minute of the Education Department or by legislation, so to grade and define the position of such schools as to secure them in regard to the receipt of grant and their general status the same advantages they at present possess.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am aware that certain higher grade and other schools will be affected by the proposed change in the Code—not, perhaps, so seriously as my right hon. friend's question would imply. There is no doubt it is desirable to organise the education given in the higher grade elementary schools, and a Minute of the Department embodying a scheme for attaining that object will shortly be laid on the Table of the House. I hope the change will be satisfactory to the schools to which my right hon. friend refers, but I cannot, of course, give any undertaking that their present position as regards grants will be wholly unaltered. The scheme to be embodied in the proposed Minute has no necessary connection with the great reform contained in the new Code. We think it would be well that both should be laid before the House when the latter is discussed at what I hope will be an early date after the Easter holidays.

TRAMWAY CONSTRUCTION BY MUNICIPALITIES.

MR. JEFFREYS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that municipalities and corporations are now promoting Bills to construct and work tramways beyond the limits of their districts; and whether, seeing that under Standing Order 170A no powers are to be given to any local authority for construction, acquisition, or taking on lease of any tramway beyond the limits of their district except under special local circumstances, the Government propose to ask the House to alter or abrogate the above Order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware that corporations are promoting Bills of this kind, and I believe that some have been passed before now, and the Standing Orders provide that in exceptional circumstances they may be passed. I do not think that any alteration of the Standing Order is possible, at all events until the Municipal Trading Committee has reported.

DOGS REGULATION BILL.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can inform the House as to the date on which the Government propose to take the Second Reading of the Dogs Regulation Bill, brought in by the President of the Board of Agriculture.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to name a day. The Bill will not, however, be taken before Easter.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government will take into consideration expressions of opinion from Chambers of Agriculture and others interested to the effect that the attempt to amend both the Agricultural Holdings Acts for England and for Scotland in the same amending Bill is likely to make the resulting legislation a source of litigation; and that the proposed legislation by reference, retaining portions of the old Acts and interpreting those retained portions by the terms of the new Bill, will also led to confusion and litigation; and whether Her Majesty's Government, instead of proceeding with the present Bill, will bring in immediately after the Easter Recess separate Bills amending and consolidating the English and Scottish Acts respectively.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: So far as the Government have been able to form an opinion there is a general desire, subject to consideration of points of detail, that the Bill is question should be passed into law at the earliest possible date. Consolidation is doubtless desirable, and the Bill has been framed with that object in view.

MR. CHANNING: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the course adopted in the case of an equally controversial Bill—the Housing Act of 1890, and, if he is unable to follow the example then set, will he give an assurance that the policy of consolidation will be ultimately adopted by the Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: One object of this Bill, as I have said, is to consolidate.

FOREIGN TRAWLERS IN THE MORAY FORTH.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the fact that during the year 1899 the Fishery Board cruisers observed twenty-two German, ten Belgian, eight Danish, five

French, four Dutch, and three Norwegian trawlers in the Moray Firth, he will state the number of days on which trawlers of each nationality were observed.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Fishery Board for Scotland that the details asked for by the hon. Member could not be given without going over the logs of the cruisers for the whole of the year, and the Secretary for Scotland does not consider that there is sufficient ground for requesting them to do so.

SCOTTISH PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, having regard to the provisions of Subsection 3 of Section 15 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, he can now state approximately a date on which the general orders and scale of fees under Section 15 will be issued.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It is not yet possible to name a date, but the hon. Member may rest assured that the orders referred to will be laid on the Table as soon as possible, and with due regard to the provisions of the section specified.

COWDENBEATH LEVEL CROSSING.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Provost of Cowdenbeath, Fifeshire, who is also manager of the Fife Coal Company at Cowdenbeath, and represents the local authority, has failed during the past year to take any steps to require the company to provide protection for the public at the railway level crossing which crosses the main street of the town; and whether, seeing that the traffic over this crossing has greatly increased during the year, and that neither the Secretary for Scotland nor the President of the Board of Trade possess powers to compel this company or the local authority to make suitable provision for the public safety, and having regard to the increased danger to the public, he will consider the desirability of introducing legislation this session to deal with railway level crossings which are not under the control of the Board of Trade.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that this question has already been answered four times—on three of the occasions by the Lord Advocate. I cannot inquire further, neither can I promise legislation on the subject.

CORK CUSTOM HOUSE.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is proposed to transfer the Inland Revenue Offices from the Custom House, Cork, to some more convenient locality in that city; will he state what premises have been acquired for the purpose; and if so, where; what the cause of the delay in effecting the transfer is; and when it will be completed.

MR. HANBURY: Yes, Sir. It has recently been decided to transfer the offices, but as negotiations are not yet finally concluded, I am unable to furnish the details asked for by the hon. Member.

KERRY ORDNANCE SURVEY.

*MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the 25-inch scale map, survey of the county of Kerry, is yet complete; and if so, whether he can state if the maps have been issued for sale, and at what price, and where can they be bought.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): The 25-inch survey of Kerry is complete. The maps have been issued for sale, and can be bought for 3s. each from any of the agents for the sale of Ordnance Survey maps in Ireland. Mr. J. Norton is the agent at Tralee.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when they were offered for sale?

*MR. LONG: I cannot.

ITINERANT PREACHERS AT BOURNEA.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that much annoyance has been occasioned at Bournea, County Tipperary by the incursion of a body of itinerant preachers, and the insulting character of their utterances to the Roman Catholic residents who constitute the vast majority of the population; whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the allegation

that one of the intruders holds the office of clerk of petty sessions in the town of Roscrea; whether the district inspector has had to draft a special body of police to the scene; and whether such police protection will entail an extra tax on the district.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Religious services have been conducted nightly by a body of Methodists for the past month in a covered building, situate in a field adjoining the public road near the place mentioned. Crowds have assembled on several occasions on the road, and by groaning, shouting, and other indecent and disorderly conduct, have endeavoured to disturb these services. It has been found necessary, in order to protect this body of worshippers, who were acting entirely within their rights, from insult and possibly assault, to have in attendance a body of police. So far as the police have been able to ascertain, the preachers have not made use of any language of an insulting character to Roman Catholics, unless the expression of religious opinions with which Roman Catholics disagree be considered an insult to them. The petty sessions clerk at Roscrea attended their services, as he had a perfect right to do, and is not in any way blameable in that respect. No additional expense to the district has been involved, as the police were drawn from another district of the same county.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): Is there any meeting-house in Bournea large enough to hold these worshippers, instead of their assembling in a public place?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware. But they have a perfect right to express their opinions, and to expect the protection of the police.

COMPENSATION TO A KERRY POLICE SERGEANT.

*MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that ex-sergeant Thomas English recently applied for compensation for an alleged injury received during the arrest of an Orangeman at Camp, County Kerry, in January, 1898, and that this application was made two years after the alleged injury; whether he is aware that the county court judge awarded a sum of £700 and costs and expenses, and that on appeal by the Kerry County Council Chief Baron Palles reduced the amount to £470; and whether, seeing that Chief Baron Palles, in delivering his decision on this appeal, expressed an opinion that it was a misfortune that the legislature has placed such a burden on the ratepayers, seeing there was no such law in England, the Government will consider the advisability of remedying the present state of the law as between Ireland and England, thereby relieving the Irish ratepayers of a burden of taxation.

MR. ATKINSON: The facts are as stated in the first and second paragraphs, save that the tramp arrested not only described himself as an Orangeman, but as a Fenian as well. The only report I have seen of the Lord Chief Baron's remarks is rather confused. I am not aware whether it accurately represents his views, and it is obvious that certain facts were not brought to his knowledge; but whatever his opinion may be upon the merits of existing legislation, there can be no doubt as to the views of the House, inasmuch as the right of constables to receive compensation under such circumstances was not only expressly preserved by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, but at the suggestion of some of the Irish Nationalist Members, extended to cover the case of police in Belfast and Dublin to whom the Grand Jury Acts did not apply. It is not proposed to deprive the Irish police of this right.

*MR. FLAVIN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that this case was tried under the Local Government Act which requires that a notice or application for the alleged injury must be served within seven days of the occurrence, and whether it is not a fact that in this case a notice was not served for twenty-three months after the alleged injury occurred?

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Is there any authority for calling an unnamed individual an Orangeman?

MR. ATKINSON: I must ask for notice of these supplementary questions.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Is it not optional with the Treasury to compensate a constable when injured on duty;

and, if so, why should Irish ratepayers be saddled with the burden?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Can the right hon. Gentleman explain how it is that such a difference exists in the value placed on policemen in England and Ireland?

MR. FLAVIN: As a matter of fact, was there any malice in this case?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is obviously impossible for the Attorney General to answer that question.

LAND COMMISSION — SITTINGS AT CAHIRCIVEEN—TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN) PROPERTY.

*MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he is aware that representations were made to the Land Commission by a number of tenants on the Trinity College property situate at Cahirciveen, County Kerry, to have their rents fixed out of court by Land Commission valuers, and that the land agent for Trinity College refused to accede to this request of the tenants; whether he can state the number of tenants whose applications are now awaiting trial at Cahirciveen; and when will the next sitting of the Land Commission be held at Cahirciveen for the fixing of fair rents.

MR. ATKINSON: I believe the fact is as stated in the first paragraph. The agent acted entirely within his rights, and the matter is not one in which the Land Commission can interfere. There are seven fair rent applications from tenants on this estate which have not yet been listed for hearing by a Sub-Commission. The date of the next sitting has not at present been fixed.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why these tenants have not got a reduction of 40 per cent. on their judicial rents, the same as Ulster tenants?

MR. ATKINSON: I certainly cannot.

ARDSTRAW ASSISTANT SCHOOL TEACHER.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been drawn to the refusal of the Board of National Education to pay the arrears of salary of the assistant teacher of the national school at Ardstraw, in the county of Tyrone, which accrued from the 1st August, 1898, to the 1st January, 1899, though the subsequently accruing salary has been paid; and whether, there being no charge against such teacher of inefficiency or misconduct, or any regulation prohibiting such payment, he can state upon what grounds the arrears in question have not been paid.

MR. ATKINSON: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the manager of the school in question claimed payment of salary to the assistant teacher from 1st August, 1898, on an average attendance of sixty pupils. Payment of salary on an average attendance of sixty pupils was sanctioned by the Treasury as from 1st October, 1898, only, and cannot be extended to any period preceding that date.

LAND PURCHASE IN COUNTY CORK.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of a holding purchased under the Land Purchase Acts (the lands of Egmont), situate in the County Cork, the Land Commission have recently permitted the tenant purchaser (Mr. G. S. Bolster) to permanently sublet the whole holding at a substantial rent as an ordinary agricultural holding, thereby recreating the relation of landlord and tenancy in the holding; whether the Land Commission intend as a general practice to waive the prohibition of subletting in the case of holdings purchased under the Land Purchase Acts, and to permit the purchasers at their pleasure to become landlord; what the reasons for allowing subletting in this particular case were; and whether the person to whom this holding was sublet will himself be entitled to purchase the holding under the Land Purchase Acts.

MR. ATKINSON: In the case to which this question refers, the tenant-purchaser in September, 1899, applied to the Commissioners, under the 30th Section of the Land Act of 1881, for their consent to receive proposals for the subletting of the holding, to commence from the following November. The

Commissioner refused the consent applied for. The tenant-purchaser thereupon in October last paid off the advance and then became entitled to sublet the holding without the consent of the Land Commission. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative. The tenant-purchaser in this case is an Assistant Land Commissioner. He based his application for liberty to sublet on the necessity of giving his whole time to the performance of his official duties. The reply to the last paragraph is, having regard to the provisions of Section 9, Sub-section (4) of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, in the affirmative.

ROAD MAINTENANCE IN IRELAND.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether any steps have yet been taken with a view to empower the various councils in Ireland to employ direct labour for the repair and maintenance of roads.

MR. ATKINSON: The answer to this question is in the negative.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Did not the right hon. Gentleman say on the 1st February last* that this matter was receiving consideration?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes; and the answer now is that no steps have been taken.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: How much attention is to be bestowed on this matter before steps are taken?

MR. ATKINSON: That is an immeasurable quantity.

IRELAND AND WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION—CASE OF JAMES CARROLL.

MR AUSTIN (Limerick): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of a man named James Carroll, who was killed on the 15th July last year by an accident in the discharge of his duties as employee of Messrs. Watkins and Company, brewers, of Dublin; whether he is aware that this man left a widow and three children unprovided for, and that the Court of Appeal held that this case did not come within the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897, because the accident did not actually occur on the premises of the brewery; and whether the Government intend to take any steps to extend the Act so as to cover accidents of this kind.

MR. ATKINSON: This question should be addressed to my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Can the right hon. Gentleman say anything as to the facts?

MR. ATKINSON: I believe they are accurately stated.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I hope the First Lord will give this matter his attention. I will put the question on Thursday.

IRISH INEBRIATES ACT—ENNIS PRISON.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, with respect to the working of the Inebriates Act (Ireland), whether he is aware that the prison intended for their use in Ennis is empty; and whether it is the intention of the Government to take such measures as will enable the Act to be put into practical operation.

MR. ATKINSON: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. Every step that the Government have been authorised to take under the Act has been taken, and it rests with the Courts to exercise the powers conferred upon them by the statute.

IRISH EDUCATION BILLS.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: When will the new scheme for national primary education be produced by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, and when will the Government Bill dealing with intermediate education be brought in.

MR. ATKINSON: The Government Bill relating to intermediate education in Ireland will be introduced very soon after Easter. The scheme dealing with primary education will be ready, I hope, at an early date after Easter.

CHAIRMEN OF IRISH COUNCILS AND THE COMMISSION OF THE PEACE.

*MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxviii., page 291.

intention of the Government to restore to the Commission of the Peace the chairmen of the county and district councils in Ireland who have been removed from the same by the Lord Chancellor.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This is a matter entirely within the discretion of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

*MR. FLAVIN: Can the First Lord say why Irish Members are not removed from the House of Commons, seeing that they have also expressed their opinions on the Transvaal war, as well as the magistrates in question?

[No answer was returned.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIABILITY OF SHIPOWNERS) BILL.

Reported, from the Standing Committee on Law, etc., with Amendments and an Amended Title: changed to Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners and Others) Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 126.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Tuesday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 167.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. WODEHOUSE reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Lord Dalkeith, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Giles, Captain Pretyman, and Mr. J. W. Wilson; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Baird, Sir Reginald Hanson, Sir Elliott Lees, Sir John Colomb, and Sir William Houldsworth.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Cowes to construct a Pier and other works; to borrow moneys therefor; and for other purposes." Cowes Pier Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Southampton Harbour Board; and for other purposes." Southampton Harbour Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the Great Berkhampstead Waterworks Company." Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to alter the capital of the New Russia Company, Limited; and for other purposes." New Russia Company Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act for authorising the Army and Navy Investment Trust Company, Limited, to prepare and carry into effect a scheme or schemes of arrangement with its stockholders, or with the holders of either class of stock, and to reduce its capital; and for other purposes." Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Barry Railway Company to provide and work steam vessels, and to subscribe to the funds of any steamship company; and for other purposes." Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to convert the capital of the Cleethorpes Gas Company; to raise additional capital; to construct works; and for other purposes." Cleethorpes Gas Bill [Lords].

And also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the District Lunacy Board for the Edinburgh Lunacy District to construct railways, waterworks, sewerage, and other works in the county of Linlithgow; to acquire lands for the protection of their water supply; and for other purposes." Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [Lords].

COWES PIER BILL [Lords].

SOUTHAMPTON HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

GREAT BERKHAMPSTEAD WATER BILL [Lords].

NEW RUSSIA COMPANY BILL [Lords].

ARMY AND NAVY INVESTMENT TRUST BILL [Lords].

BARRY RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CLEETHORPES GAS BILL [Lords].

EDINBURGH DISTRICT LUNACY BOARD BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Bill to amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir Charles Cameron, Sir William Priestley, Sir William Arrol, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Nicol.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT (No. 3) BILL.

"To amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 168.]

SMALLER DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND).

Bill to amend the law relating to the tenancy of Smaller Dwellings in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir William Arrol, Colonel Denny, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Faithfull Begg, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

SMALLER DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the law relating to the tenancy of Smaller Dwellings in Scotland," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd May, and to be printed. [Bill 169.]

TEMPERANCE REFORM, THREEFOLD OPTION (SCOTLAND).

Bill to effect direct local control of the Liquor Traffic in Scotland and other Temperance Reforms, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker Smith, Mr. James Campbell, Sir Mark Stewart, Sir Walter Thorburn, Mr. Ure, and Mr. Yoxall.

TEMPERANCE REFORM, THREEFOLD OPTION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To effect direct local control of the Liquor Traffic in Scotland and other Temperance Reforms," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 16th May, and to be printed. [Bill 170.]

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

[RESOLUTION.]

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): In bringing forward a motion on so grave and so grievous a subject as the Indian Famine, I should like to say a few words on the present situation. In the first place I may be permitted to express my respectful appreciation of the efforts which are being put forth by high and low in India to meet this stupendous calamity. A mass of people larger than the whole population of Ireland are now looking to the Government for their daily bread, and the number is steadily increasing, and will continue to increase for the next three months, while no substantial harvest can be reaped before the month of September. To succour effectively such a helpless mass of men, women, and children, scattered over a vast area, is a task almost beyond human powers; and we at home look with cordial admiration upon those who in India are labouring to save life with such untiring energy and devotion. But I will go further, and I will submit that the people of this country and the Members of this House have a duty to perform beyond that of passive spectators, however sympathetic. We should not fail to realise our responsibility towards the people of India. We hold these poor people in the hollow of our hand. The 250 millions all put together have not as much control over Indian affairs as a single elector of the United Kingdom. All the power rests with us, and we should remember that as we retain all the power, so we incur all the responsibility, and are answerable for their lives and welfare. What, then, is our duty to these starving millions? Surely in the first place this great and wealthy country should give without stint from its abundance for charitable relief. Let us consider for a moment the present situation as compared with that in the famine of 1897. I am sorry to say the result is not satisfactory. At the beginning of April, 1897, there were 2,800,000 persons on the relief works in India, and the Mansion House Fund then amounted to about £470,000. To-day the number on relief works is

nearly five millions, but the Mansion House Fund has not yet reached £160,000. In other words, the need seems to be twice as great, but the charitable contributions are only about one-third of what they were in 1897. Why is it that when the need is so much greater the help given has been so small? I do not believe that the British people are less willing to relieve suffering than they were in 1897. But what seems to be wanted is a vigorous organised effort to arouse public sympathy throughout the country. There are many now in England—Government officers, missionaries, and others—who have personal experience of the horrors of an Indian famine; others realise the present situation by means of letters from friends in India, and I am convinced that if the Lord Mayor, who is ever ready for all good works, were asked to call a great public meeting, and bring before the British public the awful sufferings of our fellow-subjects in India, money would pour in to supplement the relief efforts of Government, which can do little more than merely keep body and soul together. And what we are all willing to do singly, why should we not do collectively as a nation? The Town Council of Hartlepool has earned the gratitude of India by proposing that an Imperial Grant be made; and I doubt not that such a grant would be generally approved throughout the country. In reply to questions on this subject the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India has stated that the Indian Exchequer is not in immediate need of help. That may be so, but my present suggestion is that an Imperial Grant should be given not in aid of the Indian Exchequer, but for the same purposes as the Mansion House Fund—to help the classes who are not able to avail themselves of the relief works; to find comforts for the sick, the aged, and the children; and to aid the cultivators in recovering themselves after the famine, and replacing the plough cattle, which in many parts are almost extinct. I feel sure that in appealing to public and private charity I have the sympathy of this House, and I therefore do it with confidence. Much may thus be done to mitigate the calamity. But we must remember that, do what we will in the way of relief, death and suffering will be widespread; and the same sad experience will be repeated each time that a famine recurs. So I come to the immediate purpose of my present motion, and ask, can nothing be done by way of prevention to ward off such disasters in the future? This is the point to which I would earnestly ask the attention of this House. Speaking broadly, the Government are doing all that can be done to mitigate the calamity by famine relief. But my point is that mitigation alone is not enough. There is a good saying that "prevention is better than cure"; but if prevention is better than cure, it is much better than mere mitigation. I would ask, then, cannot something be done beforehand to strengthen the weak knees of the ryot, and put him in a better position to resist when the bad time comes? I firmly believe that much may be done. I have closely studied the case of the ryot for the last forty years, and I am no pessimist regarding him. On the contrary, I maintain that with a rich soil, a fine climate, and a peasantry skilful, industrious and frugal, India ought to be the garden of the world, and to enjoy, under the *Pax Britannica*, a very large share of human happiness. No doubt the ryots are in some respects a feeble folk, but, on the other hand, they are strong in their skill and industry, and in their power to combine for mutual help in their ancient village communities. Holding these views, I have from time to time pressed for a special inquiry into the ryot's economic condition and needs. And I have asked that this inquiry should be made in selected villages, because the self-contained rural village is the unit and microcosm of all India; and if means could be discovered to make one village prosperous, a clue would be obtained to make prosperous the half-million or more of villages in which 80 per cent. of the Indian population is now collected. This view of the case suggests hope for the future. But I do not wish just now to talk about possible prosperity. The problem now before us is a much humbler one. It is to discover how the ryot, without leaving his village, can be kept from danger of starvation. With regard to this point I will put forward three propositions which will, I hope, commend themselves to all. The first is that the mortality in an Indian famine is due to the fact that the ryots do not possess a store of food, money, or credit sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest. This proposition stands to

reason, for it is evident that the people would not die of hunger if they had food in their houses, or if they could buy or borrow it. The second proposition is that mortality from famine would practically be prevented if they had such a store of food, money, or credit. And my third proposition is that it is our duty to inquire why the ryots have not got this store, and if possible provide a remedy for so dangerous an economic condition. As regards the storage of food, we have the authority of the last Famine Commission (paragraph 592 of their Report) that the custom of storing grain, as a protection against failure of harvest, used to be general among the agricultural classes. This fact came under my own personal observation. In the earlier days of my service in the Bombay Dekhans every ryot had an underground store of millet put away, enough to keep his family for a year or two. This was easy, because in a bumper year far more of this coarse grain is produced than the people can consume. Roads and railways in those days were few, so that there was no temptation to send away the surplus produce; and the grains of the millet being enclosed in a hard shell could be buried in the dry soil for considerable periods without deterioration. The ryot, therefore acted as Joseph did in Egypt. In the fat years he filled his storehouses, so that in the lean years there was bread for the people. For various reasons this excellent custom no longer prevails. But it seems well worth inquiring whether so simple and inexpensive a safeguard against famine might not be re-established. I have long held that very strongly. I therefore last Thursday* put to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India a question on the subject. I asked him whether he would suggest to the Government of India to institute, at a convenient time, a detailed inquiry into the condition and food supply of a few typical villages in the provinces liable to famine, with a view to ascertain whether, by local storage of grain in times of plenty, and other precautionary measures, the economic condition of such villages might be so far strengthened that the failure of a year's harvest would not bring the cultivators into danger of starvation. The answer of the noble Lord was not unsympathetic, and he was good enough to promise investigation into any specific question concerning which there is insufficiency of information, with a view to the adoption of precautionary or economic measures. That was the substance of his reply. The objection to such an inquiry, as stated by the noble Lord, is that during the past twenty years two Famine Commissions have already inquired and reported, but I would point out that the object of the inquiries by the Famine Commissions was a different one. The inquiries referred to mitigation and not prevention. Their object was to perfect the system of giving relief which is now embodied in the Indian Famine Code. That will be seen from the instructions issued to the Commissioners in the Secretary of State's despatch of 23rd December, 1897. The Commissioners were there instructed to investigate the famine relief measures taken in 1897 in the several provinces, to review the lessons learnt from these operations, and to record recommendations that might prove useful in future famines. There is nothing here about measures of prevention as contemplated in my present motion. As already stated, I am making no complaint with regard to the Famine Code, which is a monument of care and skill, but I press for the modest village inquiry asked for on Thursday last, as I believe it would result in a clearer understanding of the ryot's difficulties, and lead to practical measures for strengthening his economic position. I beg to move the resolution standing on the Paper in my name.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I rise with much pleasure to second this motion. I do not pretend to the intimate knowledge of India that my hon. friend possesses, but I am not second to him in my deep interest in the welfare of its population. It is plain that this is the most awful famine of the century, and I am told by persons who know the facts well that, in spite of the utmost efforts made by the Government, and the indefatigable, self-sacrificing efforts of our Indian administrators, some millions of people will perish, and that it will cost the Government of India eight and a half millions sterling. One who knows India well stated in my hearing that he believed as many lives would be lost as in the great Madras famine—namely, five millions. People hardly realise what these gigantic

* See page 697 of this Volume.

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figures mean. Perhaps the House will allow me to read two short extracts from letters describing what the writers saw with their own eyes. The first letter is dated, "Agra Medical Missionary Institution, 27th February, 1900," and is written by Colin S. Valentine—

"On Sabbath morning we had upwards of 3,500 poor creatures, to whom as usual we preached and distributed alms. There were many cases that pained me to the heart, and which when once seen can never be forgotten. Hundreds of poor houseless, homeless creatures are flocking in from the native States, where even the drinking water has left the wells. The accounts of the suffering from those parts of the country are truly heartrending, parents actually eating their own children. While all parts of the community are suffering, the young widows and children are the greatest sufferers. It is most pitiable to see the tiny little creatures lying in their mothers' arms, far more skeletons than living creatures. Of course, those are dying by thousands. In some respects the condition of the young Hindu widows is even more sad. . . ."

The second letter is by Mr. L. E. Marks, written from Ajmere, in Rajputana, on the 26th February, 1900—

"The suffering is fearful. In many places dead bodies may be seen lying here and there. Mr. Inglis has just returned from the very worst district, and tells me that it was a common sight to see bodies being devoured by dogs, and that he and Dr. Huntly took a walk one evening and counted forty bodies, and on other evenings twenty, thirty-three, and so on. He could not go through a field without seeing several skeletons by the wayside, the bones bleaching in the sun. The Famine Commissioner saw thirty bodies in a ravine in different stages of decomposition. We hear many other such stories, and we have seen sufficient to believe it all."

I need not harrow the House with more details of the same kind. This state of things prevails over a great district inhabited by forty millions of people, and a lesser degree of famine prevails among twenty millions more. I think the country hardly realises it, and I am sure a larger response would be made to the Mansion House Fund if the citizens of London knew the real state of things. There is much that the Government cannot do. It gives a bare subsistence to those who come to the relief works, but it cannot search out the high-caste women and children who would rather die than defile themselves by labouring with the lower castes. The cattle also have perished to a fearful extent. In one district of Rajputana 90 per cent. have died, and I am told half of all the splendid breed of cattle in Gujerat, the Garden of Western India, have perished. But our object in this debate is to search for remedies, or preventive measures to alleviate the effects of famines which have now become more and more frequent. The House could not consider a more important question, for the war in South Africa must not blind us to the paramount importance of other questions. I believe there is one remedy, and only one, which can to a large extent mitigate famines: I refer to water storage and irrigation. No doubt some splendid works have been carried out on the basins of the great rivers, like that of Sir Arthur Cotton in the delta of the Godavery, where two millions of people now live in comfort in place of half a million of indigent, half-starved peasants. But we have done little beyond the river bottoms, and the great mass of the Indian population does not live in the river deltas. The famine is mainly in districts like Gujerat, the Central Provinces, and Rajputana, where rivers are scarce, and canal irrigation fed by rivers is often impossible; but in these districts the configuration of the country often lends itself to forming reservoirs during the rainy season. There are low hills with valleys or nullahs down which torrents of water rush during the monsoon, and where by damming up the watercourses there could often be obtained at small expense an artificial lake which would irrigate by small canals all the surrounding country. It is morally certain that if we had spent as much on irrigation as on railways in the past fifty years a great part of India would by this time have been beyond the reach of famine. We have spent some 300 millions on railways and only some thirty millions on irrigation. We are spending about one million a year on irrigation and eight or ten millions on railways. Has not the time come to make irrigation our principal task? We have made Egypt what it is by irrigation works; let us now try India. The crux of all those tropical countries is to get water. As John Bright truly stated—

"What you hear of as the calamity of India is that there is famine, and that the famine arises from drought; that there is a lack of water, or at least a lack of water in the right place and at the right time. Now, what is the remedy? Our Government knows very well what the remedy is; because what do they do? Whenever there is a famine they begin to think

about some manner of irrigating that particular district. They generally wait until the horse is stolen before they lock the stable door. Colonel Chesney says, 'The Ganges Canal was the outcome of the great famine of 1833, the new project in the Doab of the famine of 1861; the Orissa works of that of 1866. Oudh has escaped famine so far, and in the Oudh no irrigation works have been constructed.' He goes on to say that the Indian Government is very like a father who spends a great deal on the doctor or the nurse if his child is ill and ready to die, but in ordinary times does not take the smallest care of him whatever, or teach him anything with regard to the preservation of his own health."

Our true policy is to place an engineer of great eminence at the head of this Department, with as much power as Scott Moncrieff had in Egypt; give him a competent staff and a free hand for twenty years. I believe such a policy would revolutionise India. Unhappily there is no section of the British public sufficiently interested to press the Government on this subject; but there is a powerful interest always pressing them on the subject of railways. The great iron trade and the engineering profession bring pressure, which it is hard to resist, on every Indian Secretary, and practically his whole borrowing power is used up in this direction. Then, the Viceroys and the Provincial Governors do not remain long enough to gauge the situation so as to carry out a great policy. Above all things, continuity of policy is what is needed; and I would venture the suggestion that where a Viceroy like Lord Curzon shows exceptional capacity, and masters a huge problem like that of irrigation, he should get a second term of office. His value would be double to India in his second term of office. There is nothing India needs so much as a strong continuous policy. A benevolent despotism suits Asiatics best, and therefore when native States happen to have a good ruler he is almost worshipped by the natives. What India wants is a modern Akbar. But irrigation is not a panacea; it is not applicable to all or nearly all the surface of India; and even if it were it would not give an assured position to the Indian cultivators without moderate and fixed assessments of the land. India is a country of rural villages. It has few industries; 80 per cent. of the people live on the soil. The manual industries it used to have, such as hand-loom weaving, embroidery and brass work, have almost been extinguished by our cheaper manufactures, and millions of small artificers are now thrown on the soil for maintenance. The countless millions of small cultivators in India are excessively poor. Most of them are hopelessly in debt to the money-lenders; and when a famine year occurs they have no resources to fall back upon. When in India I met with the greatest complaints about the land assessments. The natives insisted that they were heavily over-assessed, and when the settlement arrived they were in a state of terror, and had to bribe the corrupt under-officials to get a fair return made to the revenue officer. I notice that large additions have recently been made to the land assessments. The Central Provinces are the poorest part of India; they are suffering terribly from this famine, as they did from the last one three years ago, and I ask the House to listen to what a very able civil servant, Mr. Romesh Dutt, says about them—

"In many districts in the Central Provinces the Government demands and obtains 60 per cent., plus 12½ per cent. as rates, of the landlords' supposed assets. And as the landlords never get the high rents which the Government has fixed, it comes to pass that the Government demand amounts sometimes to 80 or even 100 per cent. of the landlords' real income. I have instances before me in which landlords have offered to surrender their property, because the Government revenue demanded from them was really more than all they collected from cultivators."

That is a very bad condition of things.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have an explanation to give.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I have frequently discussed the matter with Mr. Dutt, and I know of nobody who has a more thorough grasp of the question than he appeared to have. The case of Madras is also very bad. The Government there demands one-half the net produce of the soil, which is not to exceed one-third of the gross produce, with the result that great numbers of harsh evictions take place for non-payment of rent.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: May I ask the hon. Member what authority he is now quoting from?

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I am quoting from Mr. Romesh Dutt and Mr. Rogers,

who have both carefully studied the case of Madras.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Member, and all I desired was to get at the source of his information.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: Mr. Rogers is an old civil servant.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): Is the hon. Member now quoting Mr. Rogers's own words?

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: No; I am not giving his exact words, but I will now give Mr. Rogers's figures. I find that in the last eleven years 151,000 cultivators were sold up by the Government; and I am informed that in the eleven years previously, when the cultivators were extremely impoverished by the awful famine in 1876, there were no fewer than 840,000 defaulters. Mr. Rogers obtained those figures for me, and they were taken from Government sources. Such a state of things stands self-condemned. It is quite impossible that the Indian peasantry can be prosperous under such a state of things. Need we wonder that the great bulk of them are hopelessly in debt to the money-lender, who often charges them 3 per cent. per month interest? The number of evictions every year in India is appalling, and the question is how we are to improve the condition of the peasantry of India. We shall have to devote our attention to that problem, or else we shall have troubles in that dependency. If the House thinks I am overstating the case, I will make a quotation from a source which the House generally will admit is absolutely reliable. I will quote from Sir James Caird. When he came home from Madras, about the year 1878, he put the whole case in a nutshell. Sir James Caird says—

"The right of the cultivator to mortgage the public land has made him the slave of the moneylender. Government rent must be paid on the day it becomes due. It is rigorously exacted by the officials, and as the moneylender is the only capitalist within reach, the cultivator gives a charge on the land, and hands over all his crop as a security for cash advances."

That is the condition of the great majority of the Indian peasants who are hopelessly in the hands of the moneylenders, and they have neither money nor credit to fall back upon. The people of this rich country do not realise the excessive poverty of India, where in the best of times the average income is £2 per head per annum, against £36 in Great Britain. Lord Lawrence himself states—

"The mass of people in India are so miserably poor that they have hardly the means of subsistence. It is as much as a man can do to feed his family, or half feed them, let alone spending money on what you would call luxuries or conveniences."

I am convinced that the two great means of raising the material condition of the Indian people are, an extended system of irrigation and a moderate land settlement, as far as possible fixed and permanent. The most prosperous part of India is Bengal, where Lord Cornwallis gave a permanent settlement at the close of last century. It was a mistake to confine it to the zemindars or large landlords, and it has been necessary to pass various Acts to secure fixity of tenure and fair rents for the cultivators as well. But the broad fact remains that Bengal is more prosperous and less troubled with famines than any part of India. Lord Canning recommended a permanent settlement of the land all over India. This was not adopted; but of late years the settlements have in many parts been made for shorter periods than thirty years in order to squeeze more revenue. The expense of governing India is too great for so poor a population, and it prevents the Government dealing with the land of India as the true interests of the people require. I do urge the importance of consulting more fully native opinion on this subject. The rulers of India, with the best intentions, are too much up in a balloon. Why do they not call to their aid some of the ablest of their native administrators, such as Romesh Dutt, who retired from the Indian Civil Service after a most honourable career, and whose work on India is full of wisdom? There is a vacancy on the Indian Council at present; why not fill it with such a man as Mr. Dutt, so that the Secretary for India may have the power of consulting a native of India on points which natives alone can perfectly understand? I much fear we may go on as we are doing till some catastrophe wakens us up like that in South Africa. The government of India is a gigantic problem. It is full of difficulties and dangers little

dreamt of here, and the time has come when Parliament must face those difficulties or plunge into a sea of troubles. I beg to thank the House for listening to me so patiently.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, and the extreme impoverishment of large masses of the population, a searching inquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague; and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines."—(*Sir William Wedderburn.*)

*SIR LEWIS MCIVER (Edinburgh, W.): I have listened with much attention to the two speeches which have just been addressed to the House, and I have endeavoured—with only very moderate success—to associate them with the motion which they profess to support. The motion runs—

"That, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, and the extreme impoverishment of large masses of the population, a searching inquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague; and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines."

Now the mover did not expound to us any cases where the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague had been reduced, but devoted himself to an appeal, with which I am glad to associate myself, to the benevolence of the people of this country, to assist the famine-stricken people of India in their present grievous sufferings. This is a most admirable object; but while I identify myself with the hon. Member's general sentiments, they are not very strictly relevant to the proposition upon the Paper. The hon. Member for Flint, who followed him, certainly suggested some grounds for such an inquiry, and one has less difficulty in following his various proposals. The motion proposes an inquiry into the causes which impair the power of the cultivators to resist the attacks of famine and plague. That means an inquiry into the causes of famine and the condition of the people, and practically an inquiry into the enduring widespread poverty of the people of India. That would open up a very wide vista of inquiry into nearly every branch of science, speculative and applied, from bacteriology to sociology and so forth. No doubt such an inquiry would be most interesting in its result, but it has already been done; in fact there is hardly any form of economic question in India which has not been most thoroughly threshed out by competent investigators and reported upon during the last twenty years. To do that all over again would not be helping the inhabitants of India to resist famine. We have on record three famous Reports made by very competent bodies, and I do not believe that anything can be added to what they have placed before us. We have the Famine Commission Report of 1879, presided over by Sir Richard Strachey; we have the Inquiry into the Condition of the Poorer Classes of India instituted by Lord Dufferin in 1888; and we have, the latest of all, the Report of the Famine Commission of 1897, presided over by Sir J. B. Lyall. There are shelves of Blue-books at the disposal of the hon. Baronet which will explain to him, so far as they can be explained, the causes of the famine. Judging by the way in which the hon. Baronet spoke of his own motion, it is not so much an inquiry he wants, as a subscription, and although I cannot support him so far as an inquiry is concerned, I will be delighted, according to my means, to assist him with the subscription. The great object of the hon. Member for Flint's speech was to denounce the present system of settlement in India. I have always liked that speech; I almost know that speech by heart, although I must say I admired it more in its original form when it was delivered by Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt in the North-West Provinces of India last year. But even in its latest edition the speech contains evidence of the eloquence, ingenuity and experience of its original author. It consists, as the hon. Member indicated, of an indictment against the present system of settlement in India, and the purport of what the hon. Member conveyed to us was that there should be a permanent settlement for all the ryot-wari and corresponding tenures throughout India. The hon. Member has, apparently, a passion for permanency. He wants a permanent settlement and a permanent Viceroy, com-

bined with irrigation works where experts say they are impossible and would be useless. I hope he will not be offended if I describe that as a somewhat crude proposal at its best, and one not likely to be of any practical benefit to the people of India as a whole. Any such inquiry into existing settlements in India would be a superfluity, because there is a permanent inquiry going on every year, and all the year, conducted by a most skilled and, I believe, just Department, who have absolutely no other motive than to seek a just settlement in accordance with well-defined principles. The primary fact which this House must consider in connection with the settlement between the Government and the ryots is that there is absent from the picture that important figure, the landlord. Over the greater part of India the landlord does not exist except in so far as the whole of the people of India are the landlords of the soil. Therefore the only persons that can be interested in the enhancement of land assessment in any one locality in India are the inhabitants of all the other localities, and with the Settlement Department—consisting of experienced, skilled and just officials, into whose operations inquiries are specially ordered, and who are supervised by Boards of Revenue and Local Governments, as well as by the Government of India and the Home Government—there can be no motive to enhance assessment and no object either in over-assessing or under-assessing. I do not for a moment suggest that the Settlement Department is perfect; no Department is perfect; and when we realise that the Settlement Department is engaged over an area of 225,000,000 of acres, including 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 of holdings, to assume that there would not be instances of over-assessment and under-assessment would be to assume what would be superhuman. With regard to the special cases mentioned by the hon. Baronet, I can only say that, in my opinion, to use a familiar expression, his informants were "pulling his leg," seeing that settlements are made generally for thirty years, and only in certain parts of India for twenty years. Then with regard to the Central Provinces, to which he specifically referred, he stated, on the authority of Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, that the money taken from the landowners amounted to 60 per cent 80 per cent., and even 100 per cent of the gross produce, and that most of the cultivators were anxious to surrender their holdings. The average assessment of land in the Central Provinces is 6¾ annas per acre, and the estimated annual value of produce per acre is 8 rupees, so that so far from taking 60 per cent., or 80 per cent., or 100 per cent., less than one-eighteenth is taken on the estimate I have just given. Looking at it from another point of view, how can it be contended that the Government take from the cultivators in the Central Provinces more than one-sixth, when, as a matter of fact, the export returns show that in an ordinary year more than six times the value of the total Government assessment is actually exported in agricultural produce, without taking into account the food for eleven millions of people and their cattle? Sir Anthony Macdonell—perhaps the greatest authority on the subject—stated that at a moderate estimate the assessment of the Central Provinces does not exceed 4 per cent. The hon. Member referred to Madras. I have no word of disrespect for the Mr. Rogers whom he mentioned. I was associated with the collection of revenue in Madras thirty years ago, and I have maintained my association with it since, but I have never heard the gentleman's name. He must be slightly pre-historic, and therefore not a good authority on current affairs.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: He is a retired Bombay official.

*SIR LEWIS McIVER: Quite so, and I therefore hesitate to accept as authoritative his opinion on Madras, because, as the hon. Member knows, no self-respecting Madras official is going to take the time of day from Bombay. The grievance of Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt and Mr. Rogers is apparently the alleged enhancement of the assessment of Tanjore. The people of Tanjore may believe they have a grievance. A few weeks ago, when the income tax was increased in this country, people were inclined to complain, from the exclusively selfish and personal point of view, but from the broader point of view, the country recognised that in a crisis like the present the income tax-payers were better able to bear the burden than any other part of the community. That is precisely the case in

Tanjore. Tanjore is perhaps the most smiling garden in all British India. It has a most superb system of irrigation, and in times of famine it remains as green as Colombo. Its area is about 2,700 square miles, with a population of about two and a quarter millions, which it bears lightly: that is, about 600 to the square mile, or one-fifth more than the density of the population in England. A famine in the neighbourhood is a distinct blessing to Tanjore, because it means a higher price for grain. It was found by the Settlement Department that it was under-assessed, and in order to redress the balance, and in order that the inhabitants might not be let off too cheaply at the expense of their less highly favoured neighbours, the assessment was raised. The hon. Member would appear to advocate a reversion to the old inequitable method by which the rich would escape paying their due share to the general revenue of the country, and so throw an undue burden on the poor. I am myself satisfied that even if the case of the impaired power of the cultivator to resist the attacks of famine and plague were proved up to the hilt, it could not be laid at the door of the Settlement Department. I do not claim that that Department is infallible, but beyond all question it is perpetually endeavouring to amend the settlement, and to bring it as near perfection as possible. But, Sir, is the allegation in the motion, that the cultivators' power to exist has recently been impaired, proved at all? Is it true? I maintain that it is not true. I would be the last to attempt to minimise the poverty and the sufferings of the people of India. Poverty with them is a permanent factor, and that it is an irremediable factor is only too probable. No one who knows the country would ever attempt to understate the amount of poverty existing there. With a teeming and growing population on ungrateful soil, under no conceivable circumstances can the lives of the people be anything but hard. An existence which is but "a long-drawn question betwixt a crop and a crop" is hardly the ideal of comfort. When to that situation you add an uncertain rainfall, a treacherous climate which is a perpetual vehicle of epidemic disease, and when it is remembered also that many of the smaller economies and savings in good years, which are possible to the corresponding classes in this country, are devoured by the draconic effects of the customary law with reference to marriages and other ceremonies, it will be evident that life in such a country cannot possibly be anything else but hard. In all their sufferings from plague and pestilence the people of India have an irresistible claim upon our sympathy, our consideration, and our assistance. And I am proud to think that the history of the last few years has shown that the people of this country do not shirk that responsibility of those claims on their generosity. Nor do I believe that the appeal which is now being made for assisting the famine-stricken districts of India can possibly fail. At the same time a great mistake would be made and no good be done to the people of India by exaggerating the evils from which they suffer. The proposition is that, from one cause or another, and probably in great measure by the action of the Government of India, the Indian cultivator's power to resist famine has been impaired, compared with what it formerly was. Well, I am bound to say I do not believe that that is the case. All the available evidence we have of a thoroughly trustworthy nature makes in the opposite direction. The mass of evidence to the contrary is not mere hearsay or gossip, but is given on the authority of those whose business it is to give us the facts. In the first place, there is no doubt that the great majority of the people of India are much better off than they were thirty, or even ten years ago. Judged by any standard you choose, the health of the people and capacity to resist famine, so far from having been impaired, have been increased. Tested by the progress of population, by the price of land, by the increased extent of land under cultivation, by the rate of wages, by the growth of revenue, by the habits and conditions of the people, by their increasing comforts and even luxuries, their capacity has not suffered during the last few years; and so far from being in a worse position to meet famine they are year by year getting into a better position. You find that "the average villager eats more food and has a better house than his fathers. To a considerable extent brass or other metal vessels have taken the place of coarse earthenware vessels"; and the family possess more clothes. The land-owning and land-holding classes are "undoubtedly

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better off." The market price of land has advanced in every province, and it "is from three times to ten times greater per acre than it was thirty years ago." The wages of skilled labour have increased considerably, and in many places—for example, where railways have been built—the wages of unskilled labour have also increased.* Then it is said by the Government, after close inquiry, that "it is quite certain that an Indian province and the Indian administration are now better prepared to meet a famine than they were thirty years ago."† It is also pointed out that the famines of 1770, 1803, 1833, 1837, 1841, were "far more disastrous to the general prosperity of the country" than that of 1876-8. In 1877-8 "the facts testify to a remarkable development of the power of the agricultural classes to resist and recover from the effects of unfavourable seasons."‡ The Report upon the famine of 1897-8 states expressly that—

"Of late years, owing to the high prices, there has been a considerable increase in the incomes of the land-holding and cultivating classes, and their standard of comfort and of expenditure has also risen. With a rise in the transfer value of their tenures their credit has also expanded. During the recent famine these classes, as a rule, have therefore shown greater power of resisting famine, either by drawing on savings, or by borrowing, or by reduction of expenditure, than in any previous period of scarcity of like severity."§

In connection with all that, the House will remember that the population test—that is, the effect or absence of effect of famine on the population—affords evidence in the same direction. In the last thirty years the population has increased by 70,000,000—and it continues to increase at a rate in excess of any European country, except Great Britain and Prussia. Notwithstanding the losses from famine and the consequent loss of fecundity, the rebound of population immediately after a famine is most extraordinary. The most striking instances of this, which I remember, are furnished by Bombay, Madras, and Mysore. In Bombay in the decade 1871-81 the population increased only at the rate of 1 per cent., but in the following decade it increased by 14½ per cent. In Madras, in the first period, the population decreased by 1·35 per cent., and in the second period it increased by 15·58 per cent. In Mysore the population *decreased* in the first period 17·19 per cent., and increased in the second period by 18·09 per cent. This shows that the effect of a famine upon population is practically non-existent after an interval of ten years. Another indication of the want of effect of famine upon the wealth of India is to be found in the revenue. In 1894-5 the revenue was Rx94,814,000; in 1895-6 it had risen to Rx97,977,000. Then came the famine year, when it fell to Rx93,586,000; but in the very next year, without any increase of taxation, and with a good deal of remission, the revenue rose to Rx96,139,000. In addition to increased personal prosperity, the capacity of the people of India to resist famine is further assisted by the elaborate system of Government relief in the famine-stricken districts, and by the enormously improved means of communication. I was very much amazed to hear so irrational a view from the hon. Member for Flint, as when he advocated increased expenditure on canals rather than railways. Why, the railways have been the salvation of the country. Formerly the rate of communication in India was ten miles a day, but it is now at the rate of four hundred a day, and at one-sixth of the old cost. In 1877 four railway lines carried 4,000 tons of food per day into the famine tracts—a day's meal for seven million people. I do not think hon. Members will suggest that the conveyance of food to save an immense population from famine would be at all adequate but for the railways in India. To-day in the North-West Provinces and in Oudh, except in the Himalayas and the hill tracts south of Mirzapore, there is no village more than forty miles from a railway station.* I would call the attention of the House particularly to another important result in the extension of railways. In the famine of 1896 there was a uniform level of prices of food throughout India, in the famine districts as well as in other parts. That fact alone would suggest the proposition that nowadays a famine in India is not a local food famine, but a local wage famine. We are told by the hon. Baronet who proposed

* See *Memorandum on Results of Indian Administration*, page 27.

† *Ib.*, page 28.

‡ See Secretary of State's Despatch, 26th February, 1880, quoted in *Report of Famine Commission*, 1880, page 30.

§ Quoted in *Moral and Material Progress of India*, 1897-8, page 28.

* See *Memorandum on Results of Indian Administration*, page 22.

this resolution that one of the causes of the sufferings of the people in India is the abandonment of the old fashion of private storage. But that is a phenomenon that is occurring in most countries of the world, and is only an indication of advanced civilisation. The hon. Baronet will remember that in his youth in Scotland people used to lay in a store of meal, and hung up their mutton hams from the rafters in the kitchen, against the isolation of winter, when there was no railway or any other assured form of communication. In many parts, both in England and Ireland, similar precautions had to be taken. Elsewhere people stored food when there was a danger of prolonged isolation by war, famine, or snow. But the whole tendency in this matter, with improved means of communication, is the abandonment of private storage. Take the average London household. Not many years ago the thrifty housewife laid in an eighteen months supply of composite candles; but she no longer does so, because she knows that round the corner she can get, at any moment, all the seasoned candles she wants. Formerly the average middle-class Londoner laid in a store of wine, but he finds no necessity for that nowadays, because he knows he can get it in any quantity at the stores. It is the same with private storage of perishable goods all over the world. The one exception I have heard of to the universal law is in those tracts of this country recently endowed with Sunday closing, where, I understand, the practice has grown up of storing a week's supply of ardent spirits for one day's—Sunday's—consumption. The point is that railways have rendered private storage unnecessary. In India the railway which takes away the grain of last year's crop brings it back as easily; and why should the cultivator keep his crop at the risk of destruction by fire or rats when he can take advantage of the market and hold his crop in money, which he can use either in paying his debts or in lending at usury to his friends? The hon. Baronet speaks of the ryot of to-day as if he were still down-trodden by Mussulman armies and obliged to store against war and famine. British peace and British locomotives have changed all that. The ryot is an extremely shrewd person. He reads the latest market quotations, printed in the vernacular, with quite as much, or even greater, interest than the hon. Member for Flint read the racing tapes at the Reform Club. The truth is that storage is an archaic and wasteful practice in these days of rapid turnover. In absolute peace the ryot finds it far more profitable to sell his crop and buy the grain for food as he wants it. I regret to have occupied the time of the House so long. [HON. MEMBERS: No, no!] But I am bound to say that, taking the motion as it stands on the Paper, and the speeches which have been addressed to the House in support of it, I cannot see what useful purpose a motion of this kind can serve, unless it be to bring Indian debates in this House into even further discredit. Here we have been having a futile discussion on a state of things which is non-existent, with a view to obtaining an inquiry which has already been made over and over again. I contend that the Government of India has always in the past sympathised, and does now sympathise deeply, with our Indian fellow-subjects in the sufferings which plague and famine have inflicted upon them, and, in the words of my Amendment, it "may be safely left to that Government to carry out any modification of the land tenure and industrial system which experience may have shown to be likely to mitigate the effects of famine and epidemic disease." I am satisfied that they are giving the most anxious care to the matter, and I am also satisfied that the people of India know this, and gratefully appreciate it. I am not one of those who hold that the people of India love us, but I know that they believe we are doing our best to serve them, and that the government under which they now live is a better, purer, and juster government than they have ever known. I am perfectly satisfied, also, that there is no desire in India for any such inquiry as is suggested by the hon. Baronet. If any proof of that is wanted I should like to refer this House to the recent extraordinary and practically unanimous outburst of loyalty which has come from every class and every caste of India—from Rajput prince to Madras ryot, and from every district from Peshawar to Cape Comorin. In private and in public, by spoken and written word, this astonishing and practically unsuspected sentiment has found the most unrestrained expression, and this from a population which, in the last few years, has been submitted to repeated and combined invasion of plague,

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pestilence, and famine in forms and of a severity hitherto unknown. Under these circumstances no one need have wondered if the population of that afflicted dependency had stood gloomily aloof; but instead there has been a demonstration such as the most experienced of Anglo-Indians would never have ventured to predict. And that fact alone is a better reply to the charges of extortionate assessment and neglected duty which we have heard of to-day than any amount of statistics and counter arguments. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: I rise, Sir, to second the Amendment just proposed by my hon. friend the Member for West Edinburgh. I am gratified that the appalling calamity which has once again overtaken the poor ryots of India is made the subject of a debate in this House, although it is not likely that the motion in the form in which it is submitted for consideration, or the speeches made in support of it, will furnish much light and leading to those engaged in the administration of the country, and whose duty it is to devise methods for the prevention of future famines. Owing to the absence of a meeting at the Mansion House, and to the comparatively slender response made to the Famine Relief Fund opened by the Lord Mayor, the impression was gaining ground both here and in India that the British public was at present too much engrossed in the operations in South Africa to take sufficient note of the gigantic misfortune from which our Indian fellow-subjects were suffering. The expressions of genuine sympathy used in the course of this debate will go far to reassure the poor sufferers that the British nation was neither indifferent to their woes, nor oblivious to their wants, and I trust the discussion will serve to place before the public here such full information on those points as will arouse one of those generous responses which Englishmen are always ready to make to the piteous cry for relief from a calamity of such vast magnitude. The Amendment proposed by my hon. friend is well calculated to serve this purpose, and I have therefore no hesitation in seconding it. Every attempt made to protect India against the visitations of famine, by any means whatsoever, is entitled to the sympathetic and serious attention of this House; and for me, especially, it is a bounden duty to carefully study and support every endeavour to find out any as yet undiscovered causes which are calculated to suggest preventive measures against their recurrence. In doing so, however, one has to recollect that numerous inquiries by Committees and Commissions have already been made, embracing the whole scope of the causes of the famines as well as of measures for their prevention. Still, any new suggestions that might be offered would be worth considering, and therefore I have attentively listened to the eloquent speeches made in support of the motion. The only ground which the hon. Baronet who moved it could urge for a fresh inquiry was that the former practice of storing millet or other grain had been given up by the ryot, and that a thorough analysis of the causes of the abandonment of this practice on data supplied by inhabitants of villages would furnish information as to why the cultivator is powerless to resist the attacks of famine. I deny, Mr. Speaker, that that is a sufficient argument for a fresh inquiry. A journal which is in the habit of reproducing faithfully the hon. Baronet's views expounds his argument in these words—"Famine is universally deplored, but the possibility of a remedy depends on our knowledge of Indian poverty and its causes." If this is what is intended by the fresh inquiry, then I maintain there is no adequate case made out for the House to accept the motion. Inquiries of a most searching and comprehensive nature, including this point, have been made over and over again, and the Library of this House is full of Reports dealing exhaustively with the whole subject of famines, their causes and their remedies, which it would take half a lifetime to read and to digest. It is often urged as a reason for a "village" inquiry, such as is suggested by the hon. Baronet, that the British administrator is not in touch with the masses of India, that he does not know their wants and wishes and habits, and that an inquiry by natives from natives is the only means of arriving at the elementary truth on these points. A reference to the Reports in the Library, comprising numerous statements and memoranda on these subjects both by Englishmen and Indians,

official and non-official, would prove that this is not the case. What could be more full, more descriptive of the economic condition and habits and necessities of the ryot, than the results embodied in the minutes and memoranda of men like, say, Sir James Peile, who, in the course of their long careers extending over thirty and forty years, had become intimately acquainted with the mode of life and circumstances of the ryots? Again, Mr. Speaker, the contributions to this vast subject by intelligent native gentlemen are not few. I hold in my hand a book entitled "Progress of the Madras Presidency in the last forty years," by Dewan Bahdur Srinivasa, which is a very mine of information on the very subjects on which a fresh inquiry is sought. The author is a highly-educated native gentleman, who, having served for many years with distinction in our service, and again as Minister of a large native State, brings to his task the combined experience of British and native rule, and is capable of expressing opinions on almost every subject connected with such an inquiry. The present, like many previous famines, unfortunately spreads over extensive areas in native States. Their enlightened rulers, such as the Chiefs of Baroda and Junagadh and Bhavnagar and other territories, are, with the help of their own intelligent officers, doing their very best to cope with the sufferings of the famine-stricken poor. In these States, at all events, if not within the British territory, any new inquiry on the lines now suggested by the hon. Baronet would very soon be instituted if it was felt that there was any new cause to discover or a new remedy to apply in order to prevent and combat the evil. But no such attempt is made, or even suggested. Nor is there any call made from any quarter or community in India, British or native, for a fresh inquiry. What is wanted is immediate action, not inquiry. It is admitted generally, and on both sides of the House it is often suggested, that an easy means to postpone action on ascertained or evident facts is to order a fresh inquiry. While the dilatory inquiry lasts, those whose duty it is to act find it convenient, in fact are called upon, to slacken their active and responsible functions in that connection. We have before us already all the large discussions relating to the causes and remedies of famines in their various bearings. There is the much-debated question of land assessments, the scarcely less controversial one of irrigation, and, more important than any, the question of the elementary, agricultural, and industrial education of the masses. All these await solution in actual practice in a greater or lesser degree. Especially with regard to the last-named, the educational question, there is a consensus of opinion which makes immediate activity possible. In looking over a good deal of the famine literature to which I have referred, I find numerous competent authorities, both English and Indian, advocating the spread of agricultural instruction and of the elementary education of the masses. They all strongly advocate the extension of industrial training. It has been urged against me, since I first mooted in this House the question of industrial and technical education, that it had grown into a "hobby" with me. Be that as it may, the position, to my mind, is plain with regard to its bearing on the famine. In a country where 90 per cent. of its vast population is engaged in agricultural occupations and others subsidiary thereto, no wonder that the first touch of famine or even scarcity makes them helpless. When the land denies its sustenance, vast numbers of the people succumb. Is it not time some means were adopted to lighten this burden upon the soil? If we could withdraw even a small percentage of this population from entire dependence on agricultural occupation, and divert it to other pursuits, we should, on the one hand, lessen the pressure on the soil, and, on the other, enhance the power of the proportion so withdrawn to increase the wealth of the country by working at more profitable and less uncertain industries, and thus augmenting the purchasing capacity of the poorer classes. These are remedies which require not any further inquiry, but immediate action on the part of the administrators in India. In the face of these facts, to order some vague research to ascertain new causes of the famine would not only be a fruitless task, but imply a reflection, if not a reproach or censure, on our Viceroys and Governors and responsible officers, both European and native. It would be tantamount to telling them that they had, during the long period of our rule in India, failed to find out even those elementary causes of famines, and

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neglected to adopt the equally easy means of preventing them which, to the advocates of the motion, seem to lie on the surface. Surely the House will express no such opinion or accept the grave responsibility of pronouncing such a censure. What it has to do is to express approval of the manner in which the supreme and provincial Governments in India have tried to grapple with the calamity, and particularly to show its appreciation of the efforts of Lord Curzon to deal with the larger questions I have enumerated, especially that relating to industrial education. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I have consented to second the Amendment in preference to giving my support to the motion. As I stated at the commencement of my speech, I am glad that this discussion has taken place, as it will not only convey to the distressed people of India a message of hearty and ample sympathy from the English nation in their sore trial, but will impress on the latter the great extent of the suffering which awaits succour. I trust the Lord Mayor may yet see his way to convening a public meeting; and, further, that Her Majesty's Government will, on reconsideration, feel justified in appealing to this House to make an Imperial grant. There may be considerations against granting such a Vote. There might be the fear of creating a precedent. But the circumstances under which the House would be called upon to vote such a grant are exceptional, and this is not the time to minutely weigh such considerations in the face of so grave a disaster. All possible objections can be well guarded against by allowing it to be explicitly understood that the grant was an offer to India of British sympathy in a time of exceptional trouble, and any such Vote need not form a precedent in future. If such a grant is proposed, I, for one, would heartily support it. I beg, Sir, to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of Question, in order to add the words 'this House, while deeply sympathising with its Indian fellow-subjects in the sufferings which plague and famine have inflicted upon them, is of opinion that it may safely be left to the Government of India to carry out any modification of the land tenure and industrial system which experience may have shown to be likely to mitigate the effects of famine and epidemic disease.'"—(*Sir Lewis McIver.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. MACLEAN (Cardiff): The mover and seconder of the Amendment have treated the motion of the hon. Member for Banffshire as if it were equivalent to a vote of censure on the Indian administration. I have listened carefully to the conciliatory speech of the hon. Member for Banffshire, and I heard nothing that was not moderate and reasonable. He certainly did not attempt in any way to find fault with the Indian administration. We all acknowledge that the Indian Government is doing an exceedingly good work in coping with the famine. We all say that the labours of the Indian Government are devoted, with the most self-denying efforts, to saving millions of people from a cruel death by starvation. What we do complain of is that it has become too much the habit of the Indian Government and of the India Office to treat any famine as an act of God for which nobody was responsible, and as if there were no deep causes which bring about famines of this kind, and that those causes ought not to be inquired into with the view to providing a permanent remedy for this deplorable state of things. My hon. friend the Member for Bethnal Green said there was no need for further inquiry.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: I said it had been made over and over again.

*MR. MACLEAN: And that there are volumes and volumes in this House of the experience gained by these Commissions. But is there not an inquiry now going on by means of a Royal Commission? We know that a Commission has been sitting for many years. It has lasted nearly as long as the walls of Troy or the trial of Warren Hastings, and if we may believe the rumours that reach us, it is going to present some feeble and futile report, showing that it is inadequate to deal with the great problems committed to its charge. The India Office is an admirable institution, but it seems to me to take a far too optimistic view of its own administration of India. During the past few years we have had all sorts of calamities in India —plague, famine, pestilence and war have all claimed their victims in thousands and

tens of thousands—but all that does not disturb the serenity of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India. He comes down here and takes a rosy view of the state of affairs there. He surveys the whole area of his administration, and pronounces it to be very good. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton has often given this House proofs of the very sincere and earnest sympathy he feels with the people of India, and has gained himself great honour on that account, but I am not inclined to go all the way with him when he comes down here and pronounces the Government of India to be the discreetest, wisest, and virtuousest and best Government that ever existed. We do not expect to get much enlightenment from the Indian Government on this question. Do we ever guess, is there ever any means of guessing, what is the state of public opinion out there? My hon. friend the Member for West Edinburgh spoke of the recent display of loyalty in India, but everybody knows that the offers of help were made by the Indian princes, who owed to us the security of their immense dominions, and by wealthy citizens in the great towns who had grown prosperous under our rule. The great bulk of the population held entirely aloof from any movement of that kind. Public opinion no longer exists in India. There is no freedom of speech out there. After a frontier war, a couple of years ago, when all India was ringing with censure of that inglorious campaign, one public servant had the temerity to come forward and re-echo those criticisms at a public meeting, and immediately the Government of India issued a ukase, saying that any public servant who presumed to criticise his superiors in that way would be publicly censured by the Government.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Hear, hear!

*MR. MACLEAN: That is the kind of régime the noble Lord is prepared to defend; and how can we hear free criticism when that goes on? Why, the public servants of India used to be proud of their freedom and independence, and now we have an absolute prohibition of anything like freedom of speech. Instead of that we get copious telegrams of great tours by the Viceroy of India. These come to us every day in the newspapers, and we have speeches which are distinguished by too frequent and too self-complacent references, I think to the perfect wisdom and virtue of the Government of India. That is the sort of expression of public opinion that comes to us from that country. The other day the Viceroy made a speech—a very eloquent speech, as usual—in which he said that the first and greatest duty of the Government of India was to make the people committed to their charge more contented, more prosperous, and happier people than they were before, and this sentiment came at the end of a speech in which he announced that five millions of that happy people were dependent on the Government for relief, and were hovering on the verge between life and death, and that it was a great problem how the population could be maintained in that way. Well, I think all these statements do not represent public opinion in India in the very least. We have to go further to feel what is the condition of that people, and what are the true causes of what my hon. friend the Member for Banffshire calls the extreme impoverishment of the people of that country—of the great agricultural population who form the bulk of the people of India. Many specious arguments have been used by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh to show that the people of India are very much better now than they used to be. I returned to India after an absence of twenty years, and I must say that one thing that struck me most forcibly was the listless, apathetic and really despairing attitude of the people in the face of the many calamities which have overtaken them. The element of hope which consoles us in so many misfortunes was absent, they had ceased to believe in the power of the British Government. Their state of misery was intense, and they had nothing to look forward to. What are the causes that lead to this lamentable state of affairs? What is the true economic state of India? I wish to say a few words first of what I think are the real causes of that impoverishment. First of all, I think it lies in the heavy taxation of the people. The salt tax is oppressive, and the land tax is even a greater burden on the people. One often hears the objection raised by official optimists with regard to the land revenue that it is not a land tax

at all, and that it is only rent. But this distinction is merely a play upon words. The money is taken from the people whether you call it rent or tax. You take £30,000,000 a year from them in the name of land revenue. On looking at the statistical abstract I found that the land revenue has increased by £3,000,000 a year, and except in times of famine it is never lower, and then only temporarily. That is a very bad thing for any Government to do. The State is the worst absentee landlord you could possibly find anywhere. A great landlord takes a large rent from his farmers, but he spends a great deal of money on the land. It comes back to the land in one shape or another, but the State that collects the rent takes the money away from the land and spends it in warlike preparations or in maintaining the India Office on an extravagant scale, and it does not come back to the land. The farmers are cruelly impoverished by the abstraction of this enormous amount of money every year. It is also the case that all the resources of India may be said to be mortgaged to this country. I know it is urged that India must be prosperous because there is a very active trade being carried on with that country. You say, "Look at the enormous imports and exports and the quantity of treasure that pours into India. All that means that the people must be much better off than formerly." That is all beside the actual position of the cultivator of the country. The truth is that all the great businesses in India are carried on by Englishmen. All the shipping trade is in the hands of Englishmen, and all the railways are managed by Englishmen. All the banks are in the hands of Englishmen, and nearly all the great industrial institutions of one kind or another are in the hands of Englishmen. We have perfect armies of men, either in the Government service or in individual enterprise, all flourishing out there, drawing high salaries, all saving large portions of their salaries, and transmitting portions of their savings regularly to England. Look at what India pays to this country for home charges—that is, for extravagant interest on railways, which this country would never have stood for a moment—in comparison with the enormous rates paid to the shareholders in Indian railways. They have to pay these home charges for railways, for the Army, for the India Office and one thing or another, to the amount of £19,000,000 sterling a year. If you add all that to the savings of private individuals coming to this country you make up a sum of something like £30,000,000 a year which comes to England, and for which India gets no return whatever. The export trade is £100,000,000 sterling. Nearly one-third of that trade is transported to England for the quittance of the duties of India, and no return is made to India at all. That is a great drain on the country, and produces necessarily the serious impoverishment of the people. One famine comes upon another and finds the people still more and more unable to deal with them. They live from generation to generation the mere slaves of the usurer. That is the condition of India as it now presents itself to us. During my own recollection we have had five famines in India, and this is the worst of all. How is it that we have no other famines in the Queen's dominions? I do not forget the terrible famine in Ireland sixty years ago. That famine caused a great political and commercial revolution in this country. It broke up old political parties. It converted Sir Robert Peel to free trade; and not only that, but it opened the eyes of Englishmen to the actual condition of Ireland, and we have had legislation passed during the last fifty years which has transferred an immense amount of property from the landlord class to the tenants, and also a great deal of the social and political influence they formerly wielded in Ireland. I do not say that the position in India is analogous to what took place in Ireland, but it is in some respects even worse. The people of Ireland could go over the seas, but the poor people of India do not like to go abroad. They shudder at going over the sea, and they are shut in on the land side by the barbarous legislation of the Ameer at Cabul. They have nothing to look forward to and nothing to hope for. I know it may be said that I am talking vainly, and that the whole mind of the country is now entirely absorbed in the South African war, for which we voted £60,000,000 without a moment's hesitation. Is it not time that we aroused ourselves to what we owe to other parts of Her Majesty's dominions? Would it not be a terrible thing if we were to run the risk of losing what is a far more precious possession to us, I mean the mastery

of Asia, while we are struggling for the mastery in South Africa? I hope the people of this country will awake now to a sense of their duty in this matter, and will fulfil the obligations they owe to the oldest and noblest of our possessions —a possession which has brought into the lap of England during the last hundred years countless millions of treasure, and is far more valuable to us than all the self-governing colonies put together.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I am not going to be tempted into a discussion of the merits or demerits of the Government of India. That is hardly the question before the House; but I should be prepared at any other time my hon. friend may select to argue that question, and I should be interested to hear him prove from history that there ever was in India (I might say in Asia) at any time a Government so humane, so just, and so impartial — any Government which did so much to promote the moral and physical condition of the people as the Government of Great Britain in India. The motion introduced to the notice of the House in two temperate speeches by the mover and seconder of this motion has reference to the existing state of affairs in India in connection with this appalling famine. I am sure that those who have in times past conveyed to the people of India the impression that there is in the House of Commons a feeling of indifference to the best interests of India, and that whenever any Indian question is raised the House immediately empties, will now be able to report that in the presence of this great calamity and sorrow an interest is shown on both sides and by all sections of the House in discovering the wisest and best and most generous course to be adopted in the emergency. The motion which has been submitted to the House asks that "a searching inquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague, and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines." As I have already said, so far as sympathy is concerned, we are all at one with the mover and seconder of this motion, but what we have to ask ourselves is, what is to be the nature of the inquiry which is proposed, and also what is the tribunal by whom that inquiry is to be conducted? I take the last clause of the motion first. I have read a great deal about the responsibility of the Government of India with respect to the causes of this famine. I can conceive some arguable points in the first part of the motion, but I cannot for the life of me see where the Government can be brought in as responsible for the famine. I understand—perhaps I may be corrected if I am wrong—that the cause of the famine is the failure of the rain. It is the failure of the monsoon. If the same copious rains had fallen during the last three years as India enjoyed during the preceding fifteen years there would have been no famine, and if the Government of India is not to be praised when there is a good monsoon it cannot be blamed when there is a bad monsoon. Is anybody prepared to say that if the rainfall had been the same during the last three or four years in the famine-stricken districts of India there would have been anything like the famine which now exists? The hon. Member for Flintshire has dwelt on three causes which he held that the Government were responsible for, and which he thinks contributed to this deplorable state of things. His principal point was with reference to irrigation. I think that the House will be agreed as to two points. First, that certainly up to Lord Lytton's Government there was some neglect in India with reference to irrigation works; and, secondly, there has been a very great extension of irrigation works during the last twenty or twenty-five years; and it is not fair in dealing with what is going on to-day to apply either the facts, the reasoning, or the arguments which might have been powerfully applied a few years ago. I am heartily at one with my hon. friend in reference to irrigation works. I should like to correct an error into which my hon. friend has fallen. It is said that pressure has been put upon Secretaries of State by the railway interest in this country. Personally I have never been conscious of any pressure. I can tell my hon. friend that the chief guilty person with reference to the pressure on the Indian Government for the construction of railways when I was in office was myself. I have been a great believer, and I am still a great believer, in railway works and railway extension throughout India; and there is no part of the noble Lord's

administration with which I have a deeper sympathy, and to which I give a stronger approval, than the way in which he has carried out that policy, which was not an easy policy to initiate, but which I think he has carried out, with the assistance of Lord Elgin and Lord Curzon, to a great and successful extent. But there is a limit to irrigation works. You have to consider the lie of the land, the facilities for obtaining water and getting rid of it so as not to create a swamp. I do not wish to weaken the force of my hon. friend's argument on that point. If there is a possibility in any part of India of extending irrigation works it is the duty as well as the interest of the Indian Government to extend those works, and I believe they are keenly alive to the importance of this policy. One of the grievances which have been mentioned is with reference to the settlement of the land and what is called the heavy taxation which India has to pay in the shape of land revenue. The last speaker has referred to official optimism, and he implied that there was a great deal of nonsense talked with respect to the land tax being really nothing more than revenue. I do not know whether my hon. friend will charge the late Mr. Fawcett with being an official optimist. I think if any Member of this House was more distinguished for his independent interest in the affairs of India, and his undying hostility to the Government of India, it was the late Mr. Fawcett. But that statesman declared that the Government of India exercises over a great portion of the soil the same rights of property as those which the English landlord exercises over his own estate. He also stated that the Government in India takes the place of individual landlords, and the cultivators of the soil rent their land from the Government instead of from private landowners. That, clearly, is not taxation, but it is rent. Mr. Fawcett goes on to say—

"Those, therefore, are completely in error who quote the aggregate amount of taxation which is raised in India in order to prove how heavily the people of the country are taxed. At least twenty millions per annum is raised in India by the land tax. . . . It would be as unreasonable to consider the amount raised as a burden laid on the people of India as it would be to consider the whole of the rent paid to English landlords in this country as an impost levied on the cultivators of the soil."

That is Mr. Fawcett's opinion. I have proof in reply to the hon. Member for Cardiff and the hon. Member for Flintshire that so far from taking 60, 80, and in some cases 100 per cent. of the gross produce, the Government never take more than from 4 to 8 per cent. Sir John Strachey says—

"The British Government never takes more than a fixed share, varying in different parts of India from 4 to 8 per cent."

—8 per cent. was the maximum, and I believe that the amount has been reduced—

"of the gross value of the produce, and for many years the tendency has been to diminish the share of the State and to leave a large proportion to the private ryot."

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I quoted from a letter which appeared in *The Times* as to the proportion of the rent taken from the landlords, the amount being 12½ per cent.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: The original tenant may sublet the property; he is the tenant of the State; and his rent is all that the State receives from him. The hon. Gentleman held up for our admiration the settlement in Bengal, and he wishes that all the land in India was settled as in Bengal. But surely my hon. friends know the history of the Bengal settlement. Lord Cornwallis was then the Viceroy, and he held the opinion that the greatest benefit which he could introduce in the land system of India was the land system of England, and his object was to create great territorial landlords, the zemindars, who would pay a fixed rent to the State, and become the intermediate owners of the land, levying their own rents. Nearly ninety years ago Lord Cornwallis carried out the settlement of Bengal. "This settlement," said Sir John Strachey,

"had been described as one of the most unfortunate but best intentioned plans that ever ruined the country. Millions of revenue are lost every year with no compensating advantage, and the time will come when the intelligent portion of the community in India will appreciate the fact that, in consequence of an arrangement ignorantly made a century ago, the richest class in the richest province of the Empire bears far less than its just share of public burdens."

As far as my memory serves me, and I went into the question once with great care, and after considering the subject, I came to the conclusion that the sums put into the pockets of the zemindars of

Bengal, money paid by the people and not going to the Government of India, was about ten millions sterling. I believe that the rental of Bengal when I was in office was about fourteen millions, whereas the land revenue paid to the State was a little over three millions. I am not prepared to recognise as one of the causes of famine in India the absence of the Bengal settlement throughout the rest of India; it has, like the Irish land question, been the occasion of perpetual conflict between the ryots and the wealthy zemindars who are the owners. It is said that this settlement is being screwed up. It is very easy to say so; but the increased payment has come from increased land brought into cultivation every year. This is a grievance which has always been complained of, and the hon. Member who moved the Amendment explained it with reference to the Punjab. Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and other large towns are much like the towns in this country. Land is constantly coming into use for building purposes, and naturally the State claims an addition to its rental once in thirty years upon this land, which was originally arable land in the neighbourhood of large towns. When such land is brought into the market and is let for building purposes, when its value increases 40, 50, and 100 per cent., I think the settlement officers would not be doing their duty if they did not claim increased revenue in respect to that land. All these circumstances must be taken into account before any contrast can fairly be drawn. I am of opinion that the measures to prevent famine have been the subject of exhaustive inquiry. If anyone has taken the trouble to read the report of that great Indian civilian, Sir Anthony Macdonell, with respect to the famine of 1897, he would see that the greatest experience, ability, and administrative power have been brought to bear on the solution of the question. The Government would be ill-advised if they commenced another inquiry which must necessarily be entrusted to men of equal standing and experience as those who have already described what they thought best to be done. This famine is indeed an awful famine; but what would it have been if the recommendations of the great Famine Commissions had not been carried out, and if the Famine Fund had not been in existence? I admit that the burden on India is enormous. I think the figures which the Viceroy gave in his last speech are some of the gravest figures I have ever read in connection with India, for he points out the ultimate loss to India totally irrespective of the loss for the year. But admitting that to the full, is India suffering the heavy taxation of which my hon. friend complains? My hon. friend complains of the salt duty; so do I. It is, indeed, one of the saddest features of the finances of this year that but for the famine, with a surplus of seven crores, it would have been in the power of the Government of India to make a considerable reduction in the salt duty. But I must demur to the complaint regarding the charge of interest upon capital advanced to India. Why, it is English capital mainly that has made India, and at the time the great railways were made 5 per cent. was not an extravagant rate of interest. But it is many a long day since anything like that rate has been guaranteed by the Secretary of State on Indian loans. Whether the rate is low or high, it is English capital that enabled India to construct those works, and they are bound to pay for that as for any other article that came into the market. I doubt whether in recent years more than three per cent. interest on loans has been paid by the Government. When there is not sufficient capital to construct these railways the money is drawn from England, Europe, and the United States of America. I should like to touch upon one other question and make an appeal to the Government. My hon. friend has urged the necessity of increasing public subscriptions. I hope the Famine Fund initiated by the Lord Mayor will meet with a more generous response than it has hitherto received, but that does not seem to me to meet the whole state of the case. A subscription is charity. The burden of this heavy famine is falling on the taxation of India. That taxation would in the absence of the famine have been materially reduced, and, I hope, the expenditure also. But I want to put it to the House that as a nation we owe a duty to India as a great branch of our Empire. A subscription is not a national act. A Vote of the House of Commons is a national act. A Vote of the House of Commons is a contribution of every taxpayer in the country, and, as India has

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so promptly and generously responded to the appeals made to her at this crisis on behalf of the Empire, I think the Empire should do something, not in return, but in acknowledgement and in reciprocation of the feeling of sympathy which India has so marvellously displayed. The official answer of the Treasury would be, "We are in the midst of a war; we want all our taxation." Yes; but nevertleless we are at the high tide of a national prosperity which has never been reached before. Some fourteen or fifteen days ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that he expected an enormous increase in the revenue this year, which he estimated at £116,000,000 sterling. On the 31st of March we find that the amount has approached upwards of £120,000,000. A nation which can pour into the national exchequer, unexpected by its guardian, and without any increase of taxation, as the natural result of its legitimate commercial prosperity, so large an increase upon its income as the difference between 116 millions and 120 millions sterling, is a nation that can afford to be generous. I know that a private Member has no right of initiation on this question, and it is wisely so, because proposing a grant of money rests exclusively upon the Executive Government. I am sure I am speaking the feeling of a large majority of the taxpayers in desiring an opportunity of expressing their sympathy with India in her present trouble. The moral advantage of such an act would far outweigh the mere amount of the sum voted. There are fortifications and defences much stronger than either arms or artillery, and I believe we should strengthen our hold on India, and strengthen our Empire in India, which I believe to be an unspeakable boon to India as well as a great advantage to this country, if in this hour of her suffering we held out our hand in generous sympathy, and made an outward, visible, enduring manifestation of that sympathy which India would never forget.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I am sure both sides will agree that the time of the House could not have been better occupied than in discussing a motion which gives general expression to the sympathy which we all feel for India in her hour of distress. The only jarring note in the discussion, I regret to say, came from the hon. Member for Cardiff, who indulged in a wholesale diatribe against the Indian Government and its methods of administration, but did not make one single useful suggestion for a remedy, except that the Secretary of State ought to encourage insubordination amongst his officials. This visitation is the most serious which, I believe, has occurred during the present century. It embraces a territory of something like 450 square miles, with a population of perhaps 61 millions of people. There are at the present moment five millions of people engaged on relief works, and this is likely to increase until the middle of June. But, sad as the situation is, there are redeeming features associated with it. In the first place, thanks to the admirable provisions made by the Government, I am glad to say that the mortality is much less than occurred in the corresponding season of the famine of 1897. In some districts the rate of mortality is little above the normal rate of the average year; and I am also glad to say that, owing to the increase of railway communication, which the hon. Member for Flintshire seems to question, food in most districts is cheaper than it was three years ago, when there was a less serious famine. Moreover, the attitude of the people leaves practically nothing to be desired. They are struggling with a courage and resignation which they have never shown before, and I believe this is because they have the knowledge that behind them they have the support of the financial resources of the Government. Now the first motion seems to imply that there has been some deterioration in the material condition of the community at large in India, and that they have lost some of their old power of resisting these visitations. Year after year, in the discussion which takes place upon the financial statement connected with India, I hear a number of statements made by certain hon. Members all of which tend to prove that the material condition of India is deteriorating. Now is that true? There are certain tests which admittedly prove the progress of a community or nation in prosperity. If these tests are generally applicable, India cannot be excluded from their operation. If you find a population increasing and simultaneously therewith an increase of consumption and of productive power, if there is a general improvement in dress and in the household equipment of

the great mass of the people, if year by year they make more and more use of the implements which a civilised Government gives them — post office, telegraphs, railways, and post office savings bank—if in every one of these directions there is a continuous increase, it shows that the country is in the main advancing in prosperity. If these tests are applied to India I do not think anybody could doubt that, although she may be thrown back by these grievous afflictions from time to time, still, in spite of them, she does advance in material prosperity. The beginning and the end of this and other famines in India is drought. If any hon. Gentleman who is interested in India will take the trouble to look at a map showing the density of the population throughout that continent, and then to look at a map which showed the varying rainfall in that continent, he will find that those two maps are almost identical. It is rain alone which enables the cultivator to live. From time immemorial India has been subject to famines owing to drought. In the first few years after the Government of India was transferred to the Crown a number of famines occurred. There was a famine in Orissa in 1866, when a million people died from actual starvation, and not from disease or other consequences of scarcity of food. There was a serious famine in 1868 in the North-West Provinces. There was a famine in 1874 in Bengal, and a famine which lasted nearly eighteen months a few years afterwards, in 1877 over a considerable portion of Bombay and Madras. The result of the experience of these famines was that it has brought home to the Government that the duty of mitigating these visitations must be undertaken by the Government, because they alone can perform it. In consequence a Famine Commission was appointed which laid down certain principles which experience had proved to be sound. The first principle they laid down was that there was no one year in which there was not sufficient food for the whole continent of India. The necessary thing, therefore, was to improve communications. It has been suggested by the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire that the storage of grain, as carried on in the days of old, should be encouraged. There are two reasons why that practice has been departed from. The first reason is that in the old days the population knew that if a scarcity occurred in their locality they would have to depend upon themselves for their food, and therefore they stored it. Now they know that the Government, with the agencies behind it, will take care that food is imported into that district. The second reason why they stored food was that there was then a lack of means of transport and locomotion. All that is now changed, and I quite agree that it would be advisable, if possible, to get the cultivators of certain districts to store food more than they do at present. I think, however, they have an effective reply. They might say that if they could get a good price for their produce in a good year it is as well that they should have the advantage of that price, and that when a famine came they would be able to supply themselves with the proceeds of what they had sold before. The agriculture of India occupies 80 per cent. of the whole population. Let hon. Members think what that means. Supposing that in any part of England 80 per cent. of the population were suddenly deprived of all means of occupation, what distress would it not create! As my hon. friend pointed out, the great difficulty which the Indian Government have to contend with is not a famine of food, but a famine of wages. Over a considerable part of the west of India no rain falls and then there is a cessation of the employment of 80 per cent. of the population in that enormous area. If those who take an interest in the matter were to analyse the classes who came upon the relief works they would find that in the majority of instances they consist not of cultivators, but that they are largely made up of labourers. One difficulty is of a religious character. In innumerable cases men possessed of very considerable herds of cattle have lost them altogether by refusing to sacrifice any portion of them in order to save the remainder. Not only is that the case, but men who have gone into the districts in question and tried to purchase cattle have been compelled, on account of the animosity which such a proceeding aroused, to vacate those districts and give up the idea. The problem with which the Indian Government has to deal is one which it is difficult to bring home to the minds of gentlemen, such as those who compose the British House of Commons, accustomed to move among communities

Lord G. Hamilton.

with diversified occupations. The relief works which have been started, their classification, and the employment which they have given have been enormously appreciated by those who have gone to them. It is worthy of note that in those parts of India which were visited by famine in 1897 and in the present year the people came rather more readily than in those districts which have now been visited by distress for the first time. It has been suggested that the Government might largely increase their expenditure upon irrigation. The hon. Member for Flintshire has quoted a speech of Mr. John Bright on this subject. He is not, perhaps, aware what is the sequel to that speech. Mr. Bright, influenced by Sir Arthur Cotton, made a violent attack on the Indian Government when I was Under Secretary for India on the ground that they deliberately preferred the construction of railways to irrigation, because they were urged by military considerations. Adopting Sir Arthur Cotton's view, Mr. Bright maintained that by the expenditure of a much less sum we could render India absolutely free from famine by the extension of irrigation works. At that time the India Office was in some little trouble as to the principle which should regulate further expenditure on public works. I myself moved the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into that question, which sat for two years. Sir Arthur Cotton came up, and gave expression to his views, but there was not a single man on the Committee who supported his contention. It was self-evident to everybody that if irrigation was to succeed, the supply of water, on which the irrigation works depended, must be independent of the local rainfall. Wherever we had great rivers, as we had in the Punjab, or in the south-east watershed, spreading over an enormous area, we might safely rely on a supply of a water, and irrigation works might there have paid enormously, but in other parts of India irrigation works have not paid at all. There is not a single irrigation work of any size which proved profitable in the province of Bombay. Therefore it has been ascertained that there are only a limited number of areas in India in which irrigation carried out in accordance with any large scheme could have any prospect of real success. Lord Curzon has increased the annual sum to be devoted to irrigation. The Government wish in every way to encourage the villagers and the local authorities to construct small irrigation works and tanks. In an ordinary drought such reservoirs of water are useful, but in the present drought many of them are dry. In one case a large tank which has been full almost from time immemorial could only be put to some use by ploughing it up and sowing it. Whilst, therefore, it was considered desirable to give effect to the wish for irrigation, as far as possible, it must be remembered that it was not a panacea against a drought of the kind with which the Government have to contend. On the other hand, railways are useful in time of plenty as well as in time of scarcity. If it had not been for the railway extension which has taken place during the last twenty years the people would have died by tens of millions on the present occasion. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff has complained of the great dividends which shareholders in these railways obtain. I think that if the hon. Member ever looks at prices in the stock list in this country, he will find that shareholders are getting considerably better dividends on the railways constructed here than on those which have been made in India. A good deal of the speeches that have been made have been devoted to the question of land assessment, and the hon. Member for Flint has reproduced several of the arguments and figures which a well-known Bengal gentleman, Mr. Romesh Dutt, recently used in a speech delivered by him as president of the National Congress. Mr. Dutt is a gentleman who has served with distinction in the Indian Civil Service. I have the pleasure of his acquaintance. I have communicated with him on various matters, and when, therefore, I saw that Mr. Dutt had made definite statements of fact in order to show that the land assessments in certain parts of India were too high, I at once paid the most careful attention and gave the most careful investigation to these figures and statements. I do not know where he got his figures from, but I regret to say that they are erroneous so far as Bengal is concerned. His contention was in favour of the permanent settlement, which, he said, in Bengal had preserved the cultivators and the occupiers from famine. That is not the case. In my own recollection there have been two most serious famines in Bengal, and on both occasions the condition of those

under the permanent settlement was in no degree better than that of those who were in the neighbouring districts which were only temporarily settled. Then Mr. Dutt asserted that rents were low in Bengal and never exceeded one-sixth of the gross produce, or about 16 per cent. I cannot understand what induced Mr. Dutt to make that statement. I have myself laid Blue-books on the Table of this House in reference to the permanent settlement of Bengal. The condition of the ryots under the permanent settlement in Bengal is not necessarily satisfactory. They pay the highest rents of any land occupiers in the whole of India, and the State gets the smallest amount of land revenue from them. I have made inquiries, and have been informed that so far from the rents representing only 16 per cent. of the gross produce, the grain produce rents in Bengal in most cases were over 51 per cent., and even went up to 66 per cent. of the gross produce. Mr. Dutt seemed to think that in the Central Provinces the Government of India were exacting an exorbitantly high land revenue. I am very reluctant to dogmatise as to what is and what is not a reasonable land revenue, and I should be very sorry to say that in the past we might not here and there have placed the land assessment too high. But the rules and principles which have been laid down, and which regulate the revenue officers, are framed in a spirit of justice and equity, and, so far as I have been able to make inquiry and investigation, in comparing the land revenue of British India with the land revenue of the native States, in the great majority of instances the land revenue of the adjoining native States is assessed higher than that of British India. What occurred in the Central Provinces was not that the assessment was put too high, but that it was put up rather too suddenly. The railroads in the Central Provinces brought immense prosperity to those countries. Prices rose enormously, and there was a corresponding increase in cultivation; and, therefore, when a fresh settlement was made a short time back, a very considerable increase was made upon the previous assessment. I do not think it was too high, but I do think its introduction should be gradual, so that the cultivators and the owners might adapt themselves to the altered conditions. The hon. Member for Banffshire has drawn attention to the indebtedness of the ryots. That is a most puzzling question. The assumption of the hon. Member is that this indebtedness largely arises from their heavy assessment, which they cannot pay without borrowing, and, consequently, they get into the hands of the money-lenders. That is not my view. In the first place, if the land assessment were so heavy as to afford the occupier little chance of a livelihood, the money-lender would not advance him money, as there would be no proper security. As a matter of fact, in those parts where the land assessment is exceptionally light in proportion to the gross produce, the occupiers and the owners are more heavily indebted than in those places where the land assessment is heavier. Mr. Nicholson, a Madras civilian, has given great attention to the subject of land banks. His proposals have been under the consideration of the Madras Government, and have been forwarded to the Supreme Government for criticism. When the papers are complete, I will gladly lay them on the Table of the House, because if we could at all contrive to establish a good system of land banks we should confer an enormous benefit on the occupiers. Mr. Nicholson observes that the Indian agricultural community borrowed because they could borrow without giving any thought as to how they would repay or reduce the loan. I think it will be found that, in the various parts of India where the land assessment is very light and, therefore, where the security is good, the occupiers and the owners are more in the hands of the money-lenders than where less security exists. In the Punjab the increase in the value of land is absolutely phenomenal. Forty years ago the number of years' purchase of land revenue was nine, and it has actually gone on rising and rising until now it is seventy years' purchase of the land revenue. During the same period the area of cultivated land in the Punjab has very greatly increased, and yet the increase of indebtedness has become such a social and political danger that we are now considering the desirability of legislation to prevent its further growth. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton made an appeal to the Government that a large grant should be made from the Treasury for the assistance of the Indian Government. The position of affairs between the two Treasuries

since I have been responsible for the India Office is this. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has always been ready, if the credit of India was impaired, or if they had any difficulty in raising the funds necessary for meeting the famine, to come to our assistance. But what is the financial position of India at the present moment? If we had had a normal year last year, India would have had a realised surplus of over five millions sterling, and notwithstanding the very heavy expenditure, which I cannot now estimate, I think there is every reasonable prospect that we shall have a surplus this year. If a grant were given by the Treasury as proposed, how is it to be dealt with? The funds collected by the Lord Mayor are only supplemental to the Government expenditure. They do not relieve the Government from one farthing of liability or responsibility. The object of these private subscriptions is that they should be put in the hands of committees dissociated from the Government and be applied to purposes outside the sphere of Government operations—that is to say, they are purely charitable contributions. Can the Treasury advance to the Indian Government a very large sum of money to be applied to charitable purposes? Is not that rather a startling precedent to establish? If we find that we cannot fulfil the obligations we have taken upon ourselves—that is, to find food for all who wanted it and work for all who came for it—then I think we ought to apply to the Treasury for a grant. But I think I ought to go some way towards meeting the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman. One great difficulty, when this drought is over, will be to set the farmers of the west of India on their feet again, because so many of them have lost a considerable part, if not all, of their cattle. I have been in communication with the Viceroy, and I think it would be advisable if we were to consider whether we could not somewhat extend the principle of advances which are made to cultivators. If any considerable sum is thus required by way of advances, and if, owing to the stringency of the Indian market, there should be difficulty in obtaining it, I have no doubt we will consider whether we cannot obtain in that shape some help here.

MR. MACLEAN: Lend the money, not give it.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, we will lend it, and not give it. That possibly will get over one of the main difficulties which faces us. Beyond that I do not think that, at the present moment, it will be reasonable to expect me to go. Therefore the main objects upon which the Government of India will concentrate their attention for the future will be, in the first place, to continue to develop the railway system. I will try to see if it is possible to dissociate railway finance from Government finance, and I hope, in developing the railway system, to give a great impetus to small light railways, which can be constructed at comparatively small cost, and are most useful feeders to the trunk lines. In the next place we will continue to push irrigation and to pay particular attention to those smaller works which can be constructed over a great part of the famine-stricken districts. We will, in addition, do everything we can to try to vary and diversify the occupations of the Indian people. So long as eighty per cent. of the population are dependent on agriculture, whenever these visitations come there must always be great distress. With that object I will keep in mind what my hon. friend the Member for North-east Bethnal Green is always pressing upon us—the development of technical and industrial education in place of the purely literary education which now so largely prevails in the higher standards of education. These are objects for which we can all combine, no matter how much we differ from one another upon other remedies, and, if we will so co-operate, I think we ought to be able to push them gradually through the various stages of progress and realisation. There is one most gratifying feature in connection with the exertions of our officials in India. From everywhere I hear that the contact of the officials of the Government who have been called upon to fight against plague and famine with the people on whose behalf they are working is producing the most satisfactory results, because it is bringing home to the great mass of the community in a way that is unmistakable the benevolent intentions and policy of the rule which is over them. And when the famine is over the experience so gained will be utilised for the purpose not only of improving our machinery for dealing with these exceptional emergencies, but also for improving

the industrial and agricultural systems of India in such a way as to make each recurring period of prosperity a fresh contributing force in the mitigation of distress. My hon. friend who moved the Amendment spoke, I think justly, of the extraordinary enthusiasm which the Indian people, in spite of their troubles, have shown in our success in South Africa. India in the hour of her trial has put her own distress for the time being on one side in order to show her sympathy and interest with Great Britain in the struggle imposed on us in South Africa, and, therefore, I think that we have not only a duty, but a debt to discharge in pushing on as rapidly as we can the restoration of prosperity to India.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I would not have ventured to intervene in this debate were it not that I had the opportunity of learning from officials in India in January last the steps which were being taken to cope with the terrible famine which is afflicting that country. I travelled from Calcutta to Bombay, and the route which I took was through some of the most famine stricken districts, and I found that the distress from which the people were suffering was of the most pitiable character. But I am bound to testify to the zeal and devotion with which the officials in India are endeavouring to cope with this terrible affliction which is devastating the country. From the Viceroy down to the lowest official all are endeavouring in every possible way to relieve the distress and to save the multitudes inhabiting the famine stricken areas from death and starvation. I question whether there is one other Member in the House at present who has been to India and has seen with his own eyes the terrible distress which is now afflicting that great dependency of the British Crown. Therefore I venture to think that it is not inappropriate, having seen with my own eyes the terrible sufferings of our fellow subjects in India, that I should make an appeal to the Government in support of the contention of my right hon. friend the Member for East Wolverhampton that we should give a grant in aid out of the Imperial Exchequer of this country to India to assist her in this the hour of her great distress and suffering. Is it not a fact that we gave out of the Imperial Exchequer a sum of eight millions for the relief of distress in Ireland during the great famine? It is only the other day that we relieved Egypt from an obligation to pay us £1,100,000, and last session we gave a grant in aid to the West Indies. I do not quarrel with all this or with the grant given to India as a contribution towards the cost of the Afghan war; but I appeal to the Government and to hon. Members on both sides whether it would not be a graceful act—an act which would bring contentment and peace to India and which would bind together the populations of India and this country—if we were now to give a generous grant in aid to relieve the distress in India. The Secretary of State for India questioned as to how such a grant could be applied. I venture to suggest that it could be applied to relieve the suffering cultivators of the soil in India from the payment of one year's rent or to relieve them for a term from the oppressive salt tax. I do not care how it is applied as long as it is applied. I must say that if there is one thing above all others which this famine has shown it is the great blessing that government by this country is to the Indian Empire. In bygone years a famine like the present would have claimed millions of victims, but, thanks to the Indian Empire being under the rule of this country, every effort to cope with distress is being put forward, and the loss of life is consequently reduced to a minimum. I hope that as a result of this debate we shall have an announcement from the Government that they will support, and, indeed, move that a substantial grant in aid be given out of the exchequer of this country to relieve the suffering population of India.

Question put.

The House divided: — Ayes, 72; Noes, 155. (Division List No. 95.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Broadhurst, Henry
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Colville, John
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duckworth, James
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Emmott, Alfred

Lord G. Hamilton.

Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land
Lewis, John Herbert
Macaleese, Daniel
Maclean, James Mackenzie
M'Crae, George
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Kenna, Reginald
Maddison, Fred.
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reckitt, Harold James
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soutter, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. Samuel Smith.

NOES.

Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Barnes, Frederick Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M (Dublin)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derb'shire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow.
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph D.
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hn A G H (City of Lond.)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G J (St. George's
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. W.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hozier, Hon James Henry Cecil
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. E. H.
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn-(Sw'ns'a
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverp'l)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinb'gh, W
M'Killop, James
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Monckton, Edward Philip
Monk, Charles James
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, Walter
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Richards, Henry Charles
Rickett, J. Compton
Ritchie, Rt Hon Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Sir Henry M (Lambeth
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. (Taunton)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House, while deeply sympathising with its Indian fellow-subjects in the sufferings which plague and famine have inflicted upon them, is of opinion that it may safely be left to the Government of India to carry out any modification of the land tenure and industrial system which experience may have shown to be likely to mitigate the effects of famine and epidemic disease.

COLONIES (REPRESENTATION IN THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT).

[RESOLUTION.]

*MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I do not feel it necessary to make any apology for introducing a motion which, in my opinion, is worthy of the consideration of this House. But I cannot help feeling that the issues involved in that motion are of a gravity which might entitle hon. Members to expect that it should come from some quarter of the House which would give it greater weight than I can expect any words of mine to carry. But that defect which is personal to myself may, I hope, be cured during the course of this debate. I doubt if there is anything in modern history more amazing than the phenomenal growth of our Empire. I am not going into the story of that growth at length, but there are one or two facts connected with it which I wish to state, because I think they ought to be borne in mind in the consideration of the motion which is before the House. The area of the United Kingdom is, broadly speaking, about 121,000 square miles; the area of the British Empire, including feudatory States, Protectorates, and spheres of influence, approaches, if it does not actually reach, 12,000,000 square miles. The total area of our colonies, including Nigeria, is something like 7,674,175 square miles, or considerably more than half of the whole British Empire, and the total area of our self-governing colonies is about 6,686,960 square miles, and I think there can be no doubt in consequence of events which are now transpiring that a considerable addition will soon be made to that. It is very difficult to realise even in imagination the magnitude of these colonial possessions. If we take the single colony of Western Australia we find it covers 975,920 square miles. In that one colony the whole of France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands might be spread out, and we might clip from the superfluous margin another kingdom, equal in extent to Italy. If we pass from the Pacific to the Atlantic and take Canada, in that colony the whole of the vast Empire of Russia in Europe, of Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan would disappear and leave enough of spare land to form another kingdom ten times the size of Greece. Roughly speaking, if Canada and Newfoundland be excepted, it may be said that all these great self-governing colonies have been either acquired or settled within the present century, and of all of them it may be truly said that the powers which they now exercise as self-governing communities have been conferred upon them within the last fifty years. Within the periods which I have just mentioned many changes, both Parliamentary and constitutional, have taken place in the State. We have entirely remodelled our electorate, enlarging it again and again until it may be said, without exaggeration, that the real sceptre of political power has finally passed into the hands of the people. But all through these changes is it not remarkable that no consideration whatever has been bestowed upon that Greater Britain which has been growing up beyond the seas, and that no effort whatever has been made to consolidate the Empire by widening the political basis upon which it rests sufficiently at least to give to these great self-governing colonies a voice in the Imperial Councils of the State? It is to raise that question and to give this House an opportunity for the first time, so far as I am aware, of considering, and I hope of affirming, the desirability of admitting these colonies to a share in the Imperial Councils of the State, that I have placed upon the Paper the motion that appears under my name. I would, at the very outset, express an earnest hope that whatever view on this motion may be held by individual Members, no one will let fall a word in the course of this debate which either directly or by remote suggestion is calculated to injure the pride or wound the susceptibilities of those kinsmen of ours across the seas, who have shown to the world so moving a spectacle of ardent loyalty and unmeasured devotion to the Crown. I desire hon. Members to observe that this

motion merely raises a question of principle; it proposes no scheme. I have no scheme of a practical nature to propose myself, and even if I had such a scheme I should not be in order on this motion were I to attempt to depict it. I deprecate at the present moment even the suggestion of a scheme, for in my opinion no scheme which any person could possibly suggest would have the faintest chance of success which was not hammered out in collaboration with our colonies. But there is another reason moves me to deprecate any attempt to sketch a scheme at the present moment. I feel that this is not a time in which we ought to attempt to hustle the colonies. We have been the happy witnesses of a remarkable growth of sentiment towards us on the part of our colonies, a sentiment which has grown up, which has brought forth blossom, and which has borne fruit like the magic tree of India before our wondering eyes. To attempt to force that growth or to prune it into some possibly unnatural and fantastic shape would surely be the greatest mistake in the world. But whilst I am debarred on this motion from entering into any details of a scheme, hon. Members who differ from me in the views which I hold will be at liberty to suggest any difficulties which might possibly operate against any scheme which could be proposed. Therefore, with the indulgence of the House, I will deal very briefly with some of the more obvious of these objections. Probably the first objection that would occur to anyone might be thus expressed: "It is not for us to take the initiative; it will be time enough to consider the question when the colonies prefer a request." I confess that is an objection to which very little weight, in my opinion, is to be attached. Do not let us under-estimate the value of a gracious act; even in politics it may sometimes prove happy in its effect. We may, perhaps with just cause, think little of ourselves and value lightly the privileges we enjoy, but we ought never to forget that this House is the "august Mother of Parliaments," that in the eyes of our race, wherever they may be, it is still the most sacred and venerated shrine of political freedom; and that we could do nothing better calculated to stimulate everything that is of good report in the public life of the colonies, nor confer any higher honour on our colonial kinsmen than by opening these portals to their chosen representatives. It is true that no formal demand for representation in this House has yet come from any of our colonies, but it is not less true that from several of them there has been a more or less strong pronouncement in favour of the proposition which I now submit. Canada, the greatest of them all, has certainly favoured the proposal. With the indulgence of the House, I will refer to a recent report of the Imperial Unionists of Ottawa. The members of that body form a patriotic organisation, and in their last report they advocate the framing of a Bill, to be submitted to the Imperial Parliament, for the political incorporation of outer Empire with an United Kingdom—the very object aimed at in the motion. The report goes on to say—

"Public opinion is being awakened to the necessity of a better system of providing such aid to Imperial defence, and our statesmen are being forced to face the problem of Imperial consolidation. Even those who have disapproved of Canada's active participation in the war against the South African Republics have done so because they believed that no assistance should have been tendered without first obtaining Imperial representation; whilst the Premier of Canada has expressed his belief in the possibility of Canada being represented at Westminster, and even the Hon. Mr. Tarté has declared that Canada should have a voice in the Empire."

Mr. Speaker, you have there a fact of which cognisance should be taken. The only discordant note in the general chorus of approval with which the proposal to aid this country with arms has been greeted by our colonies has come, it appears, from a small section in Canada, and proceeds from the feeling that without representation in the Imperial Parliament, and without a voice in deciding the issues of peace and war, there should be no military contribution. And I find in to-day's news a telegram from Sydney, in which Mr. Seddon, the Premier of New Zealand, is reported to have cabled to Mr. Lyne, the Prime Minister of New South Wales, with reference to Australian support of England—

"There must be no halting place. We must remain ever an indissoluble whole."

And then he goes on to express the earnest hope that—

"as Australia and New Zealand have proved sources of help and strength to the Empire, it will be found practicable to take them into the confidence of the Imperial Councils."

And if we may judge from the published

opinions expressed at interviews of the distinguished Australian gentlemen who are now in this country in connection with the Commonwealth Bill, it would appear as if the feeling in our Australasian colonies were scarcely less strongly favourable to the proposal than it is in Canada. Another objection that may possibly be taken might be put thus:—If you admit the Colonies, why not India with its vast area and enormous population? I quite feel the force of that argument, and for myself I am not opposed to the representation of India at the proper time. I think it might be a very good thing, it might help to convince our fellow-countrymen in India that a larger share of the government of India might with safety be entrusted to the natives. Within recent years we have had here two Indian native gentlemen who have been elected to represent English constituencies, and who are therefore entitled to vote upon every social, foreign, and constitutional question which can come before this House. I do not think that any hon. Member would be prepared to say that either of these two hon. Gentlemen were more distinguished by eccentricities than the ordinary English Member. But I feel that it is contrary to the political genius of the British people, even in great reforms, to take more than one step at a time; and I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that the difference of institutions, of the habits of life, and of the whole social fabric of India, and of our great self-governing colonies is so great as to make is impossible to deal with them on the same footing and at the same time; and therefore I have confined my motion to the admission of the latter. Another objection I have heard taken is based on the theory of representation and taxation. That seems to be a very serious stumbling block to many hon. Members. I cannot help thinking that to some extent that difficulty arises from a confusion of thought, springing out of the common phrase that "taxation goes with representation." If I may be permitted to say so, the true formula is, "No taxation without representation"; not "No representation without taxation." The whole thing is a mere general political axiom, and as a matter of fact we have now both taxation without representation, and representation without taxation. The formula is intended for home consumption, and is in no way applicable to the colonies. There is no analogy between the position of a colonist who contributes to the taxes of his colony, although not to the taxes of this country, and that of a citizen of this country. But, as a matter of fact, the colonies do contribute indirectly to Imperial taxation. They maintain certain defensive forces and works, and *pro tanto*, they may be said to lighten the Imperial burdens we have to bear. I find that prior to the war in the Transvaal, Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, Natal, and Canada supported forces amounting to 80,000 men. In addition, these colonies have expended large sums upon fortifications and armaments for the defence of their capital cities and important harbours; and further the southern colonies have contributed annually £126,000 to our Imperial Naval Defence, while Cape Colony has recently voted the cost of a battleship, and Canada has offered a supply of seamen. If these contributions appear small, as compared with the vast total of our disbursements for naval and military purposes, it must be remembered that our colonies are relatively poor, and that their contributions are voluntary gifts. To all these things we must add that there are now 30,000 colonial troops fighting as Volunteers under the British banner in South Africa. The magnitude of the aid, moral and material, which has been given to us by our great colonies at the present juncture cannot be measured by the mere number of the troops they have sent to the front. But if it were thought desirable to turn what is a mere voluntary contribution into a certain and fixed quota, how could that be accomplished without admitting the colonies to our councils, and giving them a voice in the determination of Imperial policy? There are many other difficulties on which I do not wish to dwell, such as the apportionment of representation, if such a scheme were carried out. No doubt it would be difficult to apportion the representation, but that is an objection which would more aptly apply to a scheme than to a mere resolution affirming a general principle. After all these difficulties are not insuperable. If we take the case of the Commonwealth Bill, which the Australian colonies are about to submit to this House, we shall find that difficulties very similar in kind, and almost equally great, have been settled by Australian

statesmen in the course of three years. If that has been done by the statesmen of our Australian colonies, surely we may expect of our statesmen with their Imperial experience that they should, in collaboration with our colonies, discover a solution of such difficulties as have been mentioned. I pass to the consideration of the advantages which might accrue from the proposal. In the first place, I do not think that we should suffer in respect of social legislation. Our colonies have been free from the ancient growths of custom and tradition which have hampered our legislation from generation to generation. They have had a *tabula rasa*, on which to write what they pleased, and they have tried many experiments in social legislation which we are now only considering. Take for instance the question of State pensions. That question has been settled in New Zealand, but in the absence of colonial representatives in this House there was no one who could give the Committee on pensions for the aged deserving poor, appointed last year, any information as to the nature of that scheme and how it has worked out in New Zealand. Then again in the important matter of our fiscal arrangements, it might reasonably be expected that these might be improved from the experience of our colonies, had we colonial representation in this House. The closer we draw to one another the greater is the chance of mutual understanding and agreement. We must remember that Canada has already rearranged her tariff system preferentially in our favour, and I understand that the Ottawa Board of Trade is considering the terms of a resolution to be submitted to the Congress of Chambers of Commerce in London, in which a tariff for the whole Empire is suggested, with preferential arrangements between Great Britain and her colonies, the duties collected to be allocated to an Imperial Defence Fund. These things may be mere straws, but they show how the wind blows, and there can be little doubt that had we a really Imperial Parliament the fiscal arrangements of the Empire might speedily be revised, to the great benefit of our commerce in every branch. Then there is a much more important point than any of those mentioned. There is the question of Imperial defence. I think no hon. Member can have followed the events of the last few months without having become convinced of the supreme importance to the Empire of unity of purpose and solidarity of action in Imperial defence. But how are these things to be achieved if every colony is to go as it pleases, to contribute or not to contribute, to control or not to control, as it chooses? The Prime Minister of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who will be ever gratefully remembered by this country, has made some important observations on this point. He said—

"If the result of the action were that Canada would be constrained to take a part in any war of Great Britain he should strongly resent it. He claimed that in the future Canada should be in a position to act or not to act, to interfere or not to interfere, to adjust as she liked, and to exercise the right to judge as to whether the cause was just. Accordingly it had been expressly stated in the Order in Council sanctioning the dispatch of the Canadian contingent that this should not be a precedent for future action, should not be a precedent for a constitutional, or even for a colonial point of view."

Now, I do not wish to criticise these statements of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, but they are sufficiently grave to attract the attention of this House. For what is it that Sir Wilfrid Laurier claims? It is the right, as the Premier of a colony, to sit in judgment upon the Imperial Parliament, and to approve or disapprove, to assist or not assist in our decisions. I cannot help thinking that on this occasion of the Transvaal war it was fortunate that the judgment of Sir Wilfrid Laurier was in our favour. We are not loved too well abroad. I question whether in the history of the country, since the Seven Years War, there has been such universal hostility manifested against us as to day; and therefore I say it is a very fortunate thing that Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Canada, and our colonies generally, have pronounced in our favour. Had they not rallied round us, how much greater our difficulties would have been! But on 15th March, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, speaking at Ottawa, went further; he then said—

"What we did we did of our own free will; and as to future wars, I have only this to say, that if it should be the will of the people of Canada, at a future stage, to take part in any war of England, the people of Canada will have their way. Of course, if our future military contribution were to be considered compulsory—a condition which does not exist—I would say to Great Britain, 'If you want us to help you, call us to your councils.'"

It seems to me that the position assumed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier is absolutely unanswerable. Are we not already approaching such a situation as he

presupposes? We shall always in future expect the colonies to help us. We are actually making arrangements to give hundreds of commissions in the British Army to our colonies; and if we do that, how can we say to Sir Wilfrid Laurier that he is not entitled to share our responsibilities for peace or war?

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. HERBERT ROBERTSON, Hackney, S.). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

*MR. HEDDERWICK (continuing): In connection with this particular subject of Imperial defence, we have also to recollect the extraordinary dimensions to which the cost of Imperial defence has grown. I do not think it is too much to say that though it is not actually beyond the capacity of the ordinary taxpayer, it already constitutes a serious burden. The British colonist, if not so rich as his relative at home, has yet shown himself capable of bearing a fair share of the burthen of Empire. But to insist upon this, or to accept it, involves a correlative right. You cannot share your burthen without sharing the right to say how the burthen is to be borne. There is the most important point of all, a point which is closely bound up with the question of Imperial defence, namely, the greater consolidation of the Empire. If we could speak to the world not only with the voice of the people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, but with the united voice of the whole Empire, we should not only exercise a much greater influence abroad, but in my opinion the greatest possible guarantee we would provide for the preservation of the peace of the world. What are the ties that unite us now? These are the Crown, a golden thread with a breaking strain, and sentiment, the greatest force in human affairs, but a fluctuating element. Colonial sentiment is now at white heat in our favour. We may do anything with it now. But how long will it remain in this malleable state? Great exaltation of feeling cannot in nature be long sustained. There will come a moment when the eloquent words of Sir W. Laurier will be forgotten, and only the memory of the wounds of war will survive. Then the question will be asked, "What are all our sacrifices for? What have we gained?" There must be something tangible to point to. We ought to learn a lesson from the history of our American colonies. We saved these colonies from destruction by the arms of France, and immediately afterwards they broke away from us on a trumpery detail of a tea tax. That illustrates the double danger of legislating at a distance and of relying upon so fluctuating an element as sentiment. The Australian Commonwealth Bill will shortly be laid upon the Table of this House. Suppose, for a moment, that we were to be so foolish as to mangle that measure on which the colonies have been labouring for three years, and on which they have set their hearts, is there any hon. Member who would undertake to say how long the fervid enthusiasm, for which we can never be too deeply grateful, would remain? What escape is there from such a calamity but co-operation in council with our colonial kinsmen? Again, it must be remembered that the immense development of our colonies is a new factor in the foreign policy of the State. It adds enormously to the problem of Imperial defence. Hitherto the foreign policy of the State, so far as I understand it, has been governed mainly by two ideas—the balance of power in Europe and the protection of the shores of the Channel. But to these must now be added the greater problem of the protection of the vast littorals of continents in remote seas. It might be expected if we had representatives of the colonies in this House that Imperial affairs would get more adequate consideration than now. Parliament, under the pressure of domestic affairs, tends to become more and more parochial. An outbreak of swine fever attracts more attention than a massacre in a protectorate; an order for the muzzling of dogs than the loss of Madagascar. The democracy must be saved from Shoreditch if it is to govern an Empire. Is it unreasonable to hope that with the presence of colonial representatives in Parliament the political horizon would be somewhat enlarged, and the tone of the public mind correspondingly elevated? I think we should also avoid great recurrent risks—risks which arise from European obligations such as the guaranteeing of the Asiatic frontier of Turkey, risks which might expose us to war at any moment, and involve our colonies in disastrous losses. Finally, I should say, whatever one may think of the proposal which I have made, and however we may be disposed towards the admission of the

colonies to representation in this House, the thing itself is inevitable sooner or later. Our colonies have ceased to be mere colonies. With our consent they have stepped into the Imperial circle. They have fought for us and bled with us. Henceforth they can never be relegated to their old position again. We have entered into a path from which there is no return, and from which, were it still possible, return, in my opinion, is not to be desired. Already some of our colonies claim to have a voice in the settlement of the South African question, and we shall have to consider their wishes. We have taken them into partnership, and the bond which has been sealed by their blood cannot be broken. In my opinion the addition of their voice in the Imperial Councils of the State would be a gain to the Empire and to the Imperial Parliament. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

*MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I do not wish to add anything to the general argument brought forward by my hon. friend who proposed this motion. I think there can be very little doubt that the majority, indeed perhaps the whole of the House agrees in the theory of Imperial federation, or some sort of representation of the colonies, and that it will become in the near or distant future an absolute necessity. But what bars the way is time and the necessity for more practical suggestions than have hitherto been brought forward, and I do not in supporting this motion wish to discuss in the very least the forms which Imperial federation ought to take, nor do I suggest that there is any immediate possibility that it should be brought into practical political existence. It will be a matter of large statesmanship and long years before we can hope to have anything of the nature of Imperial federation. We are going to discuss in a few weeks the Australian Commonwealth Bill, the idea of which has only been before the Australian public for, perhaps, twenty years, and it is only in the last ten years that any practical suggestions have been taking shape. What I want to suggest in reference to this motion is not so much that the Government should promise at this juncture to bring forward any sort of scheme of Imperial federation, but rather that there might be some sort of intermediate policy this country might adopt before Imperial federation was brought before it for serious discussion. All I wish to do to-night is to plead for the beginning of something being done to recognise the right of the colonies to some sort of representation in our councils, and the last few months have been showing that there is serious need for it. Of course the loyalty of the colonies and their action at the present time shows their intense affection for the mother country, but that loyalty has not been entirely unquestioning, although it has been given as graciously as it could be given. In Canada statesmen like Sir Wilfrid Laurier and others have, with that caution which has always characterised constitutional statesmen belonging to our race, refused, even at this juncture, to commit themselves absolutely to following Great Britain in every war in which Great Britain possibly may be engaged. It is true that they follow us in the present war, but many of the Canadian statesmen have said that, in spite of their approval of this particular conflict, they will not commit themselves to join in every war which England may undertake. This was said very directly by Sir Richard Cartwright—

> "I say that we are not, by any manner of means, called upon to take part in every war in which England may engage. I say more, that it cannot be demanded of Canada, as a right, that she should contribute to every war in which the Empire is engaged under the present circumstances. What Canada has done has been a free gift, and therein lay its value and its importance to the Empire."

It is clear from that that even at this moment, when Canadians are so anxious to assist us, they will not commit themselves, in the same way as every part of the United Kingdom admits it must be committed, to accept the doctrine that under all circumstances will they be ready to assist England, and never can they accept that doctrine until they have some sort of representation in some common Parliament. I do not expect, and I think nobody expects, that the Government should make any sort of promise or engagement, or hold out any sort of hope that Imperial federation can be a matter of the immediate future. What I wish to ask is whether the Government could not do something as a sort of stopgap policy, to enable the colonies to feel that in this country, as well as through the different parts of the

Empire, there was an idea that we ought to be working at some scheme by which they might have representation. The suggestion I am going to make is not my own, or I should not venture to make it. It comes from a colonial source. It is that the Agents General or some other people in thoroughly responsible or representative positions should be allowed, not to have voting power, for it would be ridiculous to suggest voting power—it would mean so little—but that they or some others in a representative capacity should be allowed to have a voice in our discussions. They, in a sense, are representative politicians, and they would be more so if this privilege were in any way accorded to them. This suggestion, of course, is open to many very obvious objections. In the first place, it is open to the objection that we have not had in our Parliament in any age, I believe, representatives who have not had voting power. But the conditions are peculiar; the conditions are new. The colonies are beginning to demand representation. Nobody suggests at the present time that there is any hope that they should have any real, complete and effective representation, but this is only a suggestion for a period during which the Empire is considering the possibilities of Imperial federation. It is only a suggestion which would meet some of the requirements of the situation. There has been recently in Australia a demand for some sort of representation from a very important source. The most influential newspaper in Australia, the *Melbourne Age*—which is the first paper in Australia, has the largest circulation, and has the highest influence of any newspaper in the Australasian colonies—has declared that the colonies ought to begin to demand some sort of representation, and there is no doubt that the feeling, although it has not taken any very definite shape, is growing with extraordinary rapidity. We, at this moment, however, or very soon, are going to have an Australian Commonwealth Bill before us. That Bill is the product of the enthusiasm for Australian nationality; but, quite apart from this war, quite apart from the loyalty which has been called forth by this emergency in the last few months, side by side with Australian nationalism, there has been a strong growth of Imperial feeling, and I think, when public feeling is beginning to show itself through newspapers and other sources in favour of some sort of representation, we ought in England to try to meet it. It is for that reason that I second the resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, in the interests of the Empire, that the colonies should be admitted to some direct representation in the Imperial Parliament."—(*Mr. Hedderwick.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I thoroughly appreciate the intention of the hon. Member who has just sat down and the mover in bringing this resolution before the House; and if their object is, as I am sure it is, to induce a closer union between the colonies and the mother country, I am sure they have no more strenuous supporter than myself. But, at the same time, I must say I doubt very much whether that object will be promoted by the introduction into this House of an abstract resolution on a question of the greatest complexity and importance, and by an academic discussion on such a resolution. The matter is one which, if it is to have a practical issue, must come, as all our great constitutional changes have come, gradually and with the full assent of all the parties concerned; and to attempt to stimulate it into a kind of hot-house growth by anything like a premature discussion appears to me to be distinctly a mistake. I agree entirely with what was said by the hon. Member for Wick as to the prodigious growth of our colonial Empire—a growth which is much more remarkable and admirable when we consider its effect upon the intelligence, power, and wealth of the great colonies than when it is looked at as a question of the extension of physical areas. I agree with him also, as we all do, in his recognition of the magnificent rally of the colonies to the cause of the Empire. They have shown—and I think the hon. Member did them some injustice when he said that they had answered to our call, because we made no call; they voluntarily offered, tendered the assistance which we have so gladly accepted; and, great as that has been and valuable as it is, large as are the sacrifices it has entailed upon the colonies concerned. I believe that if in any stress, or difficulty, or crisis of our fate, we did make a call on the colonies, their

efforts would be immensely greater even than those they have already made. Of course, there is a counter claim upon us, a claim which every man in this House would most gladly recognise, and if there be any demand or any request which the colonies have to make to the mother country, nothing can be more certain than that such a request, such a demand, would be most favourably considered by the British Parliament. But have they made that demand? Have they made any demand or any request for such a proposal, such an alteration of our system, as is suggested by the resolution which is now before the House? It is an abstract resolution. It is a curious thing how shortly after Mr. Gladstone has left the House his great principles are forgotten by his party. If there was one thing which Mr. Gladstone more consistently urged than another, it was that upon the Parliamentary point it was a great mistake, mischievous, and even immoral, in a Parliamentary sense, to propose abstract resolutions unless the promoters of those resolutions were prepared to give something like a sketch of the general lines upon which they wish to proceed. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this resolution said that he had no practical scheme to suggest. I am bound to say I can imagine Mr. Gladstone under such circumstances pointing out to the hon. Gentleman the extreme impropriety of saying nothing as to the practical issue of the proposal in what is merely an abstract resolution. The hon. Member is both too vague and too definite. He is too vague because he has omitted to consider any of the difficulties which lie in the way of anyone who attempts to bring about or even to hasten the advent of Imperial federation. Then he is too definite because in his resolution he does indicate and practically does commit us to a particular form in which, not Imperial federation, but Imperial representation is to be brought about. If the House were now to vote for this Resolution they would commit themselves to this proposition—that the only way to secure closer relations with the colonies, which we all desire, is by introducing some sort of representation of the colonies in the Imerial Parliament, and thereby he would exclude altogether the consideration of those proposals for a federal system which at one time or another have been under review by statesmen or others who have given their attention to the subject. Up to the present time, although, of course, there have been expressions by individuals, both by societies and individual statesmen and politicians in the colonies, there has been absolutely no definite suggestion, proposal, demand, or request on the part of any of the representative authorities of the colonies for any such change as is suggested in the resolution. I do not mean to say that such a change would therefore necessarily be unpopular in the colonies. Quite the contrary; I believe that they are at the present moment constantly considering the question, as we are here in this country, but up to the present time, at any rate, they have not propounded any particular method of dealing with the subject; and, much as I myself desire the object which the Member who has brought this resolution forward has in view, I am convinced that nothing would be more dangerous or more fatal to the success of that object than any premature discussion of details. It is a matter on which we have rather to follow our colonies than to appear to dictate or even to suggest to them. One thing our colonies may be assured of—that, however far they may be willing to go in the direction of Imperial unity, we shall be willing to follow. But, having regard to the extraordinary complexity of the situation, I do not think that the time has come when we are to suggest to them the form which I hope and even venture to believe before many years have passed that Imperial unity will take. I have said that the hon. Member who raised this question was not only too definite, but also too vague. At all events, he excluded a great number of suggestions which have been made. He is also too vague as to the resolution itself. Not by way of depreciating the value of the idea, but by way of pointing out to the House the extraordinary difficulty of discussing the subject at the present time, let me suggest to the hon. Member some of the points on which he has offered no answer whatever. This resolution is to the effect that "in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the colonies"—well, what colonies? In the first place the hon. Member has so far dealt with the matter that he has declined to include India, but he has said nothing about the Crown colonies.

MR. HEDDERWICK: It is perfectly true that I said nothing specifically of the Crown colonies, but I think I indicated that I dealt exclusively with the self-governing colonies.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: But I must point out the difficulty in which the House would be placed if they committed themselves to the terms of this resolution without thoroughly understanding what they included or omitted. I quite understand now that he proposes to deal with the self-governing colonies. Very good. The next question that arises is this: He says that they should be admitted to some direct representation in the Imperial Parliament. Well, the Imperial Parliament consists of two Houses. In which House does he propose they should be represented, or does he propose that they should be represented in both?

MR. HEDDERWICK: There are two in the other House already.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg pardon. Surely the hon. Gentleman, who calls himself a Liberal, does not call that representation.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I quite admit the force of that; but I should regard Lord Strathcona and Lord Mount Stephen as the thin end of the wedge.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Although I believe there are no more popular colonists in this country than the two noble Lords the hon. Member has referred to, and although I am sure they enjoy the confidence of their fellow-colonists, I do not think, as a matter of constitutional right, Canada would consider it was fairly represented by the two noble Lords who have been created peers in this country, and who have not been in any sense the result of election by the colonists. The House is asked to pass a resolution of this kind, and I say the hon. Member is too vague. There is a great deal to be said for representation, if it is ever to take place, in this House. There is something to be said for representation in the other House; and it might be contended that representation in one House without representation in the other would be a very unsatisfactory way of putting the colonies on an equality with the people of this country. When you have decided in which House, or whether in both Houses, the colonies are to be represented, to what extent is that representation to go? Is it to be proportional to population? The hon. Member who seconded the resolution would apparently be satisfied with what he calls a stop-gap—I think a most unfortunate phrase—and he suggests that the representation should be by the appointment of Agents General to seats in this House alone. Well, with what object does the hon. Member seek this representation? He did not directly explain it. He left the House to infer. He said nothing could be more satisfactory than the action of the colonies towards the present war, and he quoted the action of Canada as an illustration, and he went on to say that Canada reserved to itself the right to decide whether in any future war it would extend the same assistance. Of course it does. Does he suppose Canada would occupy a different position if she had not been represented by Lord Strathcona or the Agents General? Does he suppose under these circumstances we should be entitled to say to Canada, "You shall no longer go as you please, but you are to accept the decision of this House, and you are to give us assistance and send your bravest sons to fight, because you are represented in this House by the Agents General"? The proposal is altogether inadequate to the object. It is absurd to suppose that a self-governing colony, with all its natural pride and independence, would sacrifice that independence for the sake of a single vote in this House. I do not for a moment criticise the point that it might be on other accounts desirable, at some time or another, that the representatives of the different colonies should be here with a voice, as a sort of advisory members. Yet I would point out to the House that by any such proposal as that they will not secure the object with which this resolution is moved; for it is quite certain that no colony would for a moment think of giving up its independence for such a representation. But I will go to another point. Assume that the Queen altered the constitution of this Imperial Parliament. Assume that we have given to every self-governing colony representation in this House in proportion to its population—I suppose that would be the

ideal—and a certain representation in the other House also. Then what is this new Parliament to do? In the first place, what is to be its attitude towards the colonies? Is it to legislate for them? If not, what is the object of having this large representation? At the present moment the Imperial Parliament is constitutionally entitled to legislate for every colony. That is a constitutional principle which is admitted by all the colonies; but, at the same time, it is a constitutional principle which we do not often exercise. Therefore, the colonies would think that an enormous change was made if, in return for a proportionate representation, which would never be a majority in this House, we were to undertake to legislate for the colonies. Surely the idea is perfectly absurd. It is not in that way that the federation of the Empire is ever to be accomplished. We are not, in any circumstances, going to interfere with the domestic affairs of the colonies. But, then, are they to interfere with our domestic affairs? If you are to have this proportionate representation, although it would be always a minority in this House, it might be sufficient to determine a division. I was rather amused by something which fell from the hon. Member for Wick. He did not consider that that last objection was a difficulty, because the colonies were, he said, far advanced in social legislation; and he appeared to believe, and most ingenuously expressed the opinion, that they would always vote with the Radical party. I do not know how far that would commend itself to the House, if it were true; but I am bound to say that I do not think it is true. If the hon. Member has studied Canadian and Australian politics, he will know that words common both here and there have a different meaning in the two places. A Conservative in Canada or Australia is a very different person from a Conservative here; and, in the same way, a Radical there entertains very different views on particular questions from Radicals in the old country. Therefore, I do not suppose that it would be a permanent gain for either party. But it would be extraordinarily anomalous to have questions of great importance in our domestic legislation settled for us by hon. Members who, by the nature of the circumstances, would be insufficiently acquainted with our life and system. Another question is this—suppose that these representatives of the colonies come here, the only alternative to their taking part in our legislation would be that suggested by the hon. Member for Elland—namely, that they should speak but not vote. I do not mean to cast any ridicule upon that proposal, if it is thoroughly understood that all that is intended by such a change is to give the colonies an opportunity of stating their case on colonial questions and on questions in which they are separately interested. In such matters communication with the colonies is no doubt very desirable, although I am not quite clear whether it could not be better obtained by special delegations—such as that, for instance, which is at present in London on the matter of Australian federation—than it could be by representatives who would have to be appointed for a considerable time, and who might be more or less out of touch with colonial opinion after a while. But any such half-hearted representation as that would go a very short way towards the federation of the Empire, and would certainly not justify us in the slightest degree in imposing on the colonies the will of the majority in the Imperial Parliament on any questions in which they were interested. It would not advance one atom the present position, which is that these colonies, although they reverence the person of the Sovereign and are devoted in their loyalty to the Crown, are nevertheless, with that exception, independent sister nations, and their assistance is given to us voluntarily upon such occasions as that which we are witnessing to-day. But we do not pretend to have any power to compel that assistance. If the object of hon. Members opposite is to secure an arrangement such as the hon. Member for Elland seemed to suggest—that we should have the right to compel the colonies' contributions as the contributions of every individual taxpayer in the United Kingdom are compelled—all I can say is that they are proposing something very much more drastic than anything suggested by the present resolution. Have hon. Members considered what the result of the introduction of a large representation of the colonies into this Parliament would be upon our fiscal legislation? The hon. Member for Elland referred to a proposal which has been made by the London Chamber of Commerce for a fiscal arrangement with the colonies, which is,

indeed, a proposal for an Imperial Zollverein. I have often been attacked for having, as it is said, proposed an Imperial Zollverein. I have never done anything of the sort. It is one of those recurring mistakes of which I am so largely the victim, and which it is hardly worth while to contradict until the occasion becomes urgent. All I have done is to point out, following the language used by Lord Ripon, my predecessor, that if there is to be any kind of fiscal arrangement with the colonies, the only form which I myself think would be viewed with the slightest favour in this country would be that of an Imperial Zollverein, in which there should be Free Trade between the whole empire, and duties of some kind as against other countries. But I have not proposed that; I have merely stated that that alone eems to me a proposal which might be seriously considered. What I wish to point out is that these proposals have been declared by the organs of hon. Members opposite to be an atrocious heresy—a heresy so great that the founders of it ought almost to be put in the pillory or carried to the stake. Are hon. Members opposite really prepared to consider such a heresy, which might be raised by the representatives of the colonies in this Parliament if they were to take part in all the discussions in which we engage? Lastly, there is another point which, to my mind, renders any further discussion on this subject at present undesirable. The hon. Member dealt with it very lightly. He said there is a Liberal principle that there should be no taxation without representation. I differ from the hon. Member when he says that the reverse is not also true—that there cannot be representation without taxation. The proposition of hon. Members opposite, although I know they do not intend it, will be taken by the colonies as a proposal that we should tax them; that in return for giving them a representation which would never be more than a minority in this House—at any rate for years to come—we should claim the right to tax them. All I can say is that that is a proposition which, if it were ever to be considered, should come to us from them, and should not be suggested by us. It would be most dangerous if it went abroad that we in this House—any of us who are in the slightest degree responsible on either side for the proceedings—gave the slightest support to any such proposition. I have ventured to point out my reasons for thinking that this discussion is premature, that it is necessarily academic, and that it might be mischievous. In these circumstances, I cannot but hope that the hon. Member may think fit, being probably satisfied with having laid the matter before the House, to withdraw the resolution. I should be sorry to have a division on such a resolution, because as to the object which the hon. Members undoubtedly have in view I suppose we are unanimous. At any rate, nothing would give me greater pleasure than during my period of office to promote or advance in any way that Imperial unity which has been the dream of all statesmen in recent times who have devoted any attention to the subject, and which I am sanguine enough to believe is not impossible of realisation, although it may be endangered by premature discussion.

*Mr. HEDDERWICK: It is perfectly true, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, that this discussion has been academical, but there is no doubt, from the very manner in which the motion which stands in my name is framed, that I intended to do nothing more than to express a desire on the part of this House to meet any wishes on the part of the colonies which might be expressed at some future time. I cannot help feeling, in spite of the castigation, more or less merited, which some of the arguments used by me have received from the right hon. Gentleman, that the whole tone of his reply was really sympathetic. That being so, I am satisfied that all that can be gained by this discussion has been gained, and therefore I quite reciprocate his desire that no division should be taken on the motion. I feel that he has expressed very much better than I or any other Member of this House could have done our real feeling towards the colonies in this matter. I should just like to add, after what fell from him in respect of special delegations, that while I for one, and I suppose every Member of this House, would be perfectly satisfied that any special delegation would receive adequate attention from the present holder of the Colonial Secretarial Office, yet in the past and I am thinking now of the occasion of the New Hebrides difficulty — a special delegation from Australia was anything but properly received by the noble Lord who then pre-

sided over the Colonial Office. I remember that instance well, because the character of the reception then accorded to the representatives from Australia made a painful impression on my mind at the time. Therefore I feel that the merits of special delegation very much depend upon the disposition of the gentleman who may happen for the time being to hold the office of Secretary of State. I beg, by leave of the House, to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (IRELAND).

[RESOLUTION.]

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I rise to move the resolution, notice of which appears on the Paper. I do not think it will be necessary for me to occupy the time of the House at any very great length, because the resolution embodies a principle which I flatter myself will be acceptable to both sides of the House. It certainly has this advantage, that it is free from any colour of a party character. It also has this further advantage, that though dealing with Ireland it does not seek to impose any burden upon the Imperial Exchequer. The resolution points to a grievance which has been felt for a very great number of years in Ireland, and which only requires to be stated to satisfy every fair-minded and impartial man that a grievance does exist. I do not expect that even if I carry this resolution it will be possible to found upon it any legislation this session, because, in answer to a question put a few days ago, the First Lord of the Treasury, though his tone appeared to me to be sympathetic, stated that it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to bring in any Bill this session dealing with the question of Irish Private Bill legislation. There is another reason why it will not be necessary for me to discuss this question at any very considerable length, and that is that a similar question was debated very fully and very ably last session in connection with the measure dealing with Scotch Private Bill legislation which was passed into law. Many of the arguments advanced on that occasion by able and eminent Members from that part of the United Kingdom apply with even greater force to Ireland. I do not in this resolution ask the House to extend the scope of that measure to Ireland, because I would rather see how that Act operates before I adopt altogether its details. I confess that as far as I have been able to give attention to that particular Act, it seems to me that a simpler mode of attaining my end might by some exercise of ingenuity be secured. I say that this is a grievance which has been for a very long time felt in Ireland. It is a very remarkable thing that it is as old as the union itself, because at that time one of the difficulties foreseen by the promoters of the Act of Union was the hardship it would be to Ireland to have Private Bills passed by the United Legislature sitting in London instead of having local inquiries and proceedings taken for that purpose in the country itself. A letter which appears in the Memoirs of Lord Castlereagh, written by the Duke of Portland to the then Lord Lieutenant, immediately before the union, contains this remarkable passage, to which I call the attention of the House—

> "One of the greatest difficulties, however, which has been supposed to attend a project of union between the two kingdoms is that of the expense and trouble which will be occasioned by the attendance of witnesses in trials of contested elections or in matters of private business requiring Parliamentary interposition."

It is singular that 100 years ago this difficulty should have been foreseen. It was foreseen, I suppose, because it was obvious and did not require any very great amount of prophecy. Long since, in 1868, this House obviated one of the difficulties there pointed out in regard to contested elections, and got rid in that way of a very crying grievance. But passing on from that which is now ancient history, I, in looking up this matter, find that more than thirty years ago a Bill was introduced for this very purpose by an hon. Member from Ireland. Other matters intervened, and that Bill, like a great number of other Irish Bills brought in with a view to remedying grievances or supposed grievances, fell still-born, and nothing came of it. But the question notwithstanding was kept alive and has never slept from that day.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and forty Members being found present,

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (continuing): This grievance has never slept, and so far

back as 1882 the Associated Chambers of Commerce at a meeting held in London passed a resolution complaining strongly of the existing system on the grounds set forth in this resolution. Those grounds were the great waste of the time of Parliament, the delay to the suitors, and the heavy costs and charges attending the promotion of Private Bills. That was in 1882. On the 12th March, 1888, some of the hon. Members present may recollect a Select Committee on this question was appointed to inquire into the whole subject, and among the members of that Committee were the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose and the hon. and learned Member for North Louth. That Committee did not arrive at any conclusion as to what the means of obviating this grievance should be, but two or three alternative methods were suggested. My resolution does not at all involve the adoption of any one or other of them. But the members of that Committee were all agreed as to the evils of the present system. These evils may be summarised in this way. If a Private Bill is promoted from some remote corner of Ireland, a place which, perhaps, many Members here have never heard of, the promoters must have counsel in London, and, owing to the peculiarity of the procedure before Parliamentary Committees and the enormous crush of Parliamentary business attendant on that system, they are obliged not only to employ counsel who have a monopoly, and are, consequently, more expensive than they otherwise would be, but also to employ, instead of one or two counsel, as in an ordinary case, four or five, to ensure the attendance of any one of them. Another point upon which the Committee agreed, as a cause of delay and a source of grievance, was the shortness of the daily sittings and the uncertainty of the time at which any given Bill would be taken up. The consequence of this is that witnesses from a remote part of Ireland may be kept waiting day after day and week after week before they are put into the witness box. A third point is what has been adverted to before on some occasion in this session—the twice-told tale before a Committee of the House of Commons and then before a Committee of the House of Lords, or *vice versâ*—going over the same story, through the same evidence, with the same counsel. Then last, and perhaps greatest, the enormous expense involved by the costs of witnesses, the costs of deputations that come over in connection with the Bills, and the costs of Parliamentary agents in London. These sources of expense it is impossible to minimise and impossible to overrate. A very experienced gentleman, well known in Dublin and every part of Ireland, gave evidence before that Committee, and he pointed out that even in the case of uncontested Bills evidence was required, and the cost was most unreasonable. In the case of one company it was necessary to get a Private Bill merely to obtain additional power to borrow money, and that Private Bill cost the company £1,233. Such a measure as that ought not to have cost the company a £50 note. The same company had to pay £796 for an opposed Bill, and £378 for another which was unopposed. This evidence was given by a man of business, who produced the vouchers, and there can be no question about the facts. There was a short Bill from the county of Cork to indemnify a grand jury for exceeding their powers, and that Bill cost £490. They also had another Bill the opposition to which cost nearly £1,000. We need not go very far to look for other instances, because within the last two years we have had two Bills in particular which startled us. The Dublin Boundaries Bill was the subject of two debates in this House, and that cost the corporation supporting it over £16,000. One body of Commissioners who opposed that Bill had to pay also about £8,000 for their opposition, and to this must be added the costs of three or four other townships who opposed it. I may mention that the cost of promoting this abortive Bill before a Committee of this House and the House of Lords tots up to nearly £45,000. It is impossible for any country to progress with such a millstone round its neck that is involved in the promotion of these Bills. Then there was the Bill for the Amalgamation of the Railways, which also led to nothing, and the cost to the different companies concerned was something enormous. In the course of that Bill the eminent counsel who is at the head of the Parliamentary Bar—Mr. Pope—stated that the cost of the inquiry was about £5 a minute. It was further stated that the cost to the promoters was about £400 a day. There were a number of Private Bills before the House last

Serjeant Hemphill.

session, and they were all promoted at very great cost. One of the things pointed out during the inquiry into the Belfast Drainage Bill in 1897, where all the witnesses examined came from Belfast at great expense, was that all this money could have been saved by a local inquiry. In the height of the railway fever an anecdote is told of one eminent Parliamentary counsel who held briefs for twenty-three Committees, all of them sitting at the same time. He was leisurely walking up and down the corridor and another counsel asked him, "How do you happen to be here when these cases of yours are going on, and so many people want you?" His reply was, "It doesn't matter; I can only be there in one case at a time, and so the other twenty-two have no right to complain." That illustrates the disadvantage at which parties are placed by being brought to London. The three or four leading counsel at the Parliamentary Bar are like the young doctor in one of Smollet's works, who represented himself as being so busy that if he were cut up into a thousand pieces he would have plenty of work for each piece to do. I wonder that this hardship has been endured so long. It has been wittily said that the bringing up of country witnesses does some good at all events, because in the case of Railway Bills those witnesses from remote parts by coming to London make their first acquaintance with champagne and turtle. Waterford in particular has been victimised by the present system. In the year 1875 Waterford had an improvement Bill and it cost them £2,100. In 1889 a Bill was brought in by that corporation to enable them to borrow money, and the cost of that measure was between £900 and £1,000. They had to oppose another Bill in 1895 which cost £589, and in the same year the City Corporation Act cost them £2,168. The cost to Waterford in 1887 of opposing the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill was £475, and the cost of their opposition in 1898 to the Fishguard and Rosslare Railway Bill was £1,200. That is quite enough to prevent places like Waterford making any progress, for it leaves them no alternative but to submit to unjust and unfair legislation because the ratepayers will not stand the oppression of such heavy costs. In the year 1899 the Waterford Corporation opposed the amalgamation of the Great Southern and Western Railways at a cost of £2,146, the burden of which fell upon the ratepayers of the city of Waterford, which is by no means a wealthy corporation.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): But how can you avoid the cost?

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL: By having a local inquiry, where counsel would get only the same fees as in ordinary cases. Counsel in Ireland are not like the Parliamentary counsel in London, who seem to be able to get any fee they like to ask. There is no doubt that the fees at the Parliamentary Bar are enormous, but they are not too much, because the counsel are obliged to work very hard during a short period of the session. In the case of a local inquiry in Ireland there would be no such fees, because counsel would be paid on the same scale as if they appeared at any other tribunal. Irish counsel would be familiar with the localities, and they would offer their services at considerably less fees than the great Parliamentary leaders at the Bar in London. I am sure if the hon. Member for Peckham were as well acquainted with the profession as I am he would appreciate this distinction without the necessity of this lengthy explanation. That is one part of the expense, but the expenses of the witnesses are the material part. Then again the expenses of the Parliamentary agent would be saved altogether. It has been stated that the average number of English Private Bills is between 300 and 400 every session, and hon. Members can well imagine the delay which is involved in promoting Private Bills. I have avoided in my resolution stating how this particular mischief can be remedied, but I want the House to affirm that there is a grievance to Ireland in not having a cheaper tribunal. I claim for my resolution the advantage that it may be supported by the most vehement opponent of Irish Home Rule, because that question is not involved in it. There are a great number of hon. Gentlemen opposite who are bitterly opposed to the idea of Home Rule for Ireland, and I want to disabuse their minds of any suspicion that this resolution involves the affirmation of the principle of Home Rule.

You passed the Act for Scotland last year which took away from the Committees of this House, in the first instance, the passing of these Private Bills. The House can carry this resolution without weakening its position either for or against Home Rule, although I firmly believe that we shall ultimately succeed in obtaining that great consummation of our political life. There is nothing in this proposal of mine which will either obstruct or facilitate Home Rule, but it is a proposal of obvious justice. By affirming this resolution you will facilitate legislation in this House. This is not a lawyers' question, for Grand Jury after Grand Jury have passed resolutions pointing out the evil of the present system in Ireland. The Chambers of Commerce both in England and Ireland have unanimously passed resolutions calling attention to the grievance under which we labour in not having a Bill similar to that which was passed last year for Scotland. I do not ask the House to pledge itself to the details of any scheme, but simply to affirm the existence of this injustice, and if this resolution is adopted it will facilitate the passing of legislation in future sessions. I beg to move the resolution standing in my name.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I rise for the purpose of seconding this resolution. The subject is one with which I am not unfamiliar, and I am exceedingly curious to know what answer can be given against it by the Government. This will be an illustration of the different way in which you treat Ireland. This resolution does not commit the House to any definite plan, but it simply affirms that some change is necessary with a view of economising the time of Parliament and reducing the expenses of suitors. That was the very object of the Scotch measure dealing with this question which was passed last year. When that measure was under consideration it was pointed out that many parts of Scotland were so far from the centre of Imperial Government that it involved a great expense to those promoting Private Bills in Scotland, who were required to come down with their witnesses and employ counsel in London. It was also pointed out that the expenses of promoting Bills in this House were very considerable, and these grievances were the foundation of the Scotch Private Bill Procedure Act. It was passed to enable people in Scotland far removed from London to have a local inquiry in regard to Private Bills, so that they might have an opportunity of investigating the matter on the spot. That was one of the great arguments so far as the Scotch Bill was concerned. The next point was that it would be very much cheaper, and when I state these facts I am using the arguments of the hon. Member below the gangway, and also the arguments of the Government, that it was in the interests of Private Bill legislation that there should be a local inquiry on the spot. Not only did you provide a local inquiry, but you preserved the authority of Parliament all the same, because anyone may appeal against the local inquiry. If there be opposition to the Bill then it must of necessity come to this House. A Private Bill here has to go through the House of Commons and the House of Lords, but if it be a Bill brought up from Scotland, where there has been a local inquiry there can only be one joint inquiry of the Lords and Commons upon it, so that the expense is very much less than if you had two inquiries. That was the principle of the Bill, which the Government contended was in the interests of Scotland. These Committees are taken as applying more particularly to Ireland, which is further away from London, and where the people, as a whole, are not so wealthy as in Scotland. There are unanimous recommendations from Committee after Committee in favour of this principle, and yet when it comes to the point it is said, "Oh, Ireland is different." I am surprised that the First Lord of the Treasury is not in his place, when he himself, in order to reform the Private Bill procedure, brought in a Bill which embraced the three countries. So far, then, as the principle itself is concerned, there is the fact that a Unionist Government brought in a Bill to place Ireland on the same footing as Scotland, and I shall be surprised indeed if from the Government benches any hon. Gentlemen gets up for the purpose of saying that this resolution to give to Ireland that which the Government gave to Scotland last year, and which they intended to give to Ireland some years ago, is one that cannot be accepted. If you say that Ireland is not to get this, that would show at once how differently you treat Ireland to any other portion of the Empire. I cannot conceive it possible that there should be any

adverse decision in this matter, and the only way in which I could account for such a thing is that a minor member of the Government has received certain instructions with regard to this matter and is unable to go beyond his instructions. It is not, I think, fair or proper to delegate a matter of this kind to a minor member of the Cabinet. We all know perfectly well how the Attorney General for Ireland will split hairs and talk about the great difference between Ireland and the other portions of the United Kingdom, but he cannot get over this important fact, that Ireland is in the same position as regards the principle of this motion as Scotland. We have got a separate Bill for Scotland, and now we are asking for a separate Bill for Ireland, and there can be no reason why Ireland should be treated differently from Scotland in a case of this kind. I shall therefore second the resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the present system of Private Bill Legislation for Ireland constitutes a serious grievance to the interests of suitors from that country, and requires alteration, with a view to economising the time of Parliament, preventing delay, and reducing the heavy costs and charges attending the promotion of private Bills at present, and that legislation with this view is urgently required."—(*Mr. Serjeant Hemphill.*)

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.) said the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was made now, when a Unionist Government was in power, and it was supported by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, who was anxious that the relief the proposal made in regard to Ireland should be extended to Scotland. But the hon. Gentleman had failed in the past to suggest or propose himself such a Bill for Scotland. It was complained that counsel engaged in the advocacy of Private Bills before Parliamentary Committees seldom attended to their duties, for they were continually popping out of one committee-room to another. Well, he had known counsellors in the little town of Belfast holding briefs in Crown Courts and Record Courts taking fees in both when they were only able to attend to one court. In certain respects Ireland had been relieved from heavy expenditure in regard to Private Bills by the Provisional Order system.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): And so in Scotland.

SIR JAMES HASLETT said he was aware of that, but, speaking after thirty years experience of coming to Parliament for the passing of certain local Bills, he had come to the conclusion that the expense was very considerable, and this was especially felt when the community concerned were quite agreed upon the removal of a grievance. But he thought that in certain cases Parliament afforded a fair basis for settling contested Bills that a narrow and limited tribunal would not. While he was anxious to extend a system of local inquiries, he was not prepared to give up the right of appeal to Parliament. But in some simple cases, where small Bills were brought forward, it ought not to be necessary to have proof of their necessity being given in London, and, if so, then certain heavy charges should be borne by Parliament. But the right hon. Gentleman who moved the motion never stated what the machinery should be for taking evidence locally, whether in the Court of Assize or before a Recorder or a chairman of quarter sessions.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: The motion is not intended as material for a Bill.

SIR JAMES HASLETT said that was true enough, but there had been a series of resolutions brought forward on this subject, and no suggestion had been made by the right hon. Gentleman as to the local tribunal to which Private Bills should be referred. If he meant that a representative of the Local Government Board of Ireland should be the tribunal, then that would be a mistake, for what would a representative of that Department know of the wants and idiosyncrasies of a given locality? He thought that by a judicious enlargement of the Irish Local Board minor Acts might be satisfactorily disposed of, while still retaining the right of appeal to Parliament. There had been an inquiry into this very subject, and he regretted that the Report made had been utterly futile, because it failed to cause any change to be made in the present system of Private Bill

legislation. The Report of the Committee of Inquiry left them in the dark, like the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman this evening. He would suggest that there should be a small Committee of Inquiry into the whole subject. This was not a party or a political question, and such an inquiry should be conducted so that it might devise a scheme by which the Private Bill legislation of Ireland should be improved and the cost of it minimised. As to the motion of the right hon. Gentleman, it was not a step forward, and whether it were adopted or not would not help the matter in the least, and, therefore, he could not see in it the promise of any real advantage.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had not made quite clear the line which he took upon the resolution; he first of all went a certain distance in favour of the resolution, and then harked back. The subject matter of the resolution before the House was in no sense political; it was purely a matter of business and a social question. As a member of the Corporation of Dublin he protested against the enormous expense to which his city had been put in respect to Private Bill legislation; thousands and thousands of pounds had been spent in Dublin on Private Bills, and it ought to be the business of this House to find out some more economical method of dealing with these matters. It was inaccurate to say that only certain sections of the community in Ireland were interested in this resolution, because, as a matter of fact, some of the strongest Unionists in Ireland at the present moment were its firmest supporters. The principle once acknowledged, the reform would be easily carried out. It was not the duty of the private Member to do more than initiate the motion, it was for the Government to find a remedy for this state of things. The expense of Private Bill legislation was a barrier against and prevented necessary improvements. The hon. Member gave two instances of the unnecessary amount of expense involved in having to come to London to obtain powers. The Act of 1893 for the drainage scheme of Blackrock cost the promoters £7,248, and the opponents £2,824, and when it became necessary to introduce an amending Act in 1896, it cost a further £2,400. So that in connection with the main drainage of Blackrock, a work which was absolutely necessary, there was an initial expense of £7,000 before anything could be done, and the whole matter could have been much more economically dealt with in Ireland. In another case, where a flood had carried away a small bridge, a Bill was brought before Parliament to rebuild the bridge, and the costs of obtaining the Act were £5,000. The amount of the contract for erecting the bridge was £500. It was maintained by the Government that Ireland enjoyed the same liberties as England and Scotland, but that was not so—especially with regard to Private Bill procedure, and he hoped a satisfactory assurance would be given with regard to that matter. He had great pleasure in supporting the resolution.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I hope it will not be thought out of place if I, as an English Member, support this resolution. So long as the Imperial Parliament legislates for Ireland, it becomes the duty of that Parliament to listen to the exposition of any evil connected with administration in Ireland, and to do the utmost to redress any real Irish grievance. This is a grievance of long standing, and I think we ought to show a disposition to do all in our power to remedy it. Reference has been made to public opinion on this question. I have been brought in contact with many public bodies who have convinced me that not only in Ireland, but in England, public opinion is universally in favour of the proposal. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the resolution spoke of what the Associated Chambers of Commerce had done eighteen years ago. It had passed unanimously a resolution in favour of such a scheme, on the motion of one of the leading members of the Dublin Corporation, who was a strong Unionist, and the motion was seconded by an equally strong Unionist. I believe that every Unionist from Scotland would vote for it. I should like to add that, whatever may be said of the system of Private Bill legislation, it is not altogether without objection in this country. It has, however, one great advantage in dealing with difficult and delicate subjects of all kinds, and that is the unimpeachable character of the tribunal. If a mis-

carriage occasionally takes place, as in the case of the Huddersfield tramways, no one impeaches the Parliamentary Committee or its disposition to do its duty. But while that is a great advantage, there are many great disadvantages. The cost is simply enormous, and is a deterrent in many cases, and frequently prevents the carrying out of great local improvements. My hon. friend has asked how could that be met? I say it could be met by more local legislation. If the inquiry was made on the spot, and the evidence taken on the spot, it is manifest that that would be an easy way of reducing the expenditure. As an illustration of the great objection taken to the present system, even by rich municipalities, there was a case the other day of an unopposed and by no means difficult Bill, where the House fees and counsels' expenses amounted to thousands of pounds. Hence the popularity of Provisional Orders instead of Private Bill legislation. But Provisional Orders are not always applicable to all cases. All these objections are very strongly accentuated in the case of Ireland. The mere matter of distance decides that point. Distance means time, and time means cost, and that constitutes a great tax on Ireland, and we ought to put an end to the present system. There was a case of the burning of the Court-house at Cork, and a Bill had to be obtained for the rebuilding of it, the cost of which was out of all proportion to the actual cost of the rebuilding. Scotland has got the advantage of an experimental system which is answering very well so far as we can hear. Why should we delay giving a similar system to Ireland? An objection was made to the resolution as being academic. But it asserts a principle, and if the principle is conceded it might be passed into law some day. I grant that possibly it is desirable that there should be a Committee appointed. I take it that all that the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the resolution desires is to take the sense of the House in favour of a great public advantage, and if that sense is expressed his object will be attained, and we will be on the road to the assimilation of Private Bill legislation in the various branches of the United Kingdom, and towards the amelioration of the relations between them.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): If my right hon. friend goes to a division I shall support him. I honestly say that I acquiesce in this proposal rather than feel enthusiasm for it. I quite agree that the expense involved in Private Bill legislation in this House approaches to a scandal, and is a very serious tax on Ireland. I understand that the cost of the Railway Amalgamation Bill was calculated at the rate of five guineas a minute, which must have amounted to a very serious tax on the shareholders of the two companies, as the inquiry went on for some time. Therefore, on the merits there cannot be much difference of opinion. The reason why I will vote for it not with enthusiasm, is that my right hon. friend may be inclined to think that this resolution means a little more than it does. If anyone is under the delusion that a mere change in Private Bill legislation would satisfy the national aspiration for self government in Ireland, he is mistaken. I think it necessary always to raise a voice of warning on this question, because so many people in this country are inclined to think that a little concession here and there, and a small sop thrown here and there, is all that is required to deal with the Irish question. The question goes a great deal more deeply than that; and although I will vote for the resolution I do so regarding it as no step whatever either to advance or to satisfy our national aspirations.

MR. BANBURY: The hon. Gentleman has told us that while he intends to vote for this resolution, this resolution would in no way gratify the national aspirations of Ireland. Now, I have nothing whatever to do to the national aspirations of Ireland. I thought this was a practical question as to whether or not measures of Private Bill legislation could be carried on cheaper than now. I was not aware that the national aspirations of Ireland had anything whatever to do with the case. The hon. Member for South Islington has told us that, in his opinion, it would be advisable to alter the Private Bill procedure, but, at the same time, he also told us that the Parliamentary Committees that now exist afford the most impartial tribunals which can be imagined. But then he says that they are rather expensive. I listened with great anxiety to hear from him what tribunal could be cheaper and at the same time as impartial.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I would conduct the inquiry locally.

MR. BANBURY: I am not aware that a local inquiry would be so impartial as those in this House. It seems to me, as a practical man, that if you went before a tribunal which is impartial and popular, although expensive, it would be, in the long run, cheaper than to go before a tribunal which may be impartial, but, at the same time, incompetent. The right hon. Gentleman who moved the resolution fell into the same error as the hon. Member for South Islington, because he did not allude to the tribunal which he proposed to set up. I believe the late Mr. Gladstone said that there were no more dangerous things than abstract resolutions. I do not know anything which could be more adequately described as an abstract resolution than that now before the House. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark told us he was not unfamiliar with the present circumstances. I do not know any subject with which he is not familiar. I have heard him during the seven or eight years I have been in this House give an opinion on every subject under the sun. His opinions may be wise and show great learning; but while he himself said he was not unfamiliar with the subject he did not enlighten us with regard to his views as to the new tribunal to be set up.

MR. CALDWELL: There is the Scotch tribunal.

MR. BANBURY: Well, the Scotch tribunal was only set up last session. Would it not be advisable to wait a little longer before we set up another tribunal for Ireland? I have no means of knowing whether the Scotch tribunal has been successful or not. My hon. and gallant friend near me informs me that the Act has not yet come into operation, and therefore the advantages of the Scotch tribunal cannot be quoted, because it is not yet in existence. Therefore, I am quite correct in saying that we ought to wait a little longer. Moreover, we must also remember that Scotsmen are eminently practical men and great economists. Only last night we heard of Scotsmen who are willing to take a post on the Lunacy Board, and not anxious to take the salary, and, when it was shown that so many men were anxious to do their duty for nothing, the Lord Advocate practically withdrew his Bill. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said there was great expense attendant on the present Private Bill procedure, and that counsel were paid fees for cases in which they did not appear. That undoubtedly is a scandal; but I was going to say, did you ever hear of any counsel who did not take fees in every case? [AN HON. MEMBER on the Irish benches: Not in Ireland.] My hon. friend says "Not in Ireland," but I do not see that Irish counsel are any better than English counsel. If an Irish counsel were to get a fee for not attending a case, he would do so; and I should do the same myself. I think it would be advisable before we came to a division on this question that we should get from some hon. Member opposite some information as to the precise tribunal wanted. If he can set up a tribunal which has all the attributes which everybody in this House admits that a Committee of this House has—namely, impartiality, leisure to attend to the question before it—and at the same time a tribunal which will conduct the inquiry cheaper, I shall be happy to vote for such a resolution. But so long as it is a mere abstract resolution I shall be obliged to vote against it.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): Inasmuch as I am in active sympathy with the principle of the motion introduced by the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to mention very briefly my reasons for supporting it. In the first place, it is clear that, apart from politics, the Chambers of Commerce of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, and all the leading commercial men all over Ireland are entirely at one in this matter. I think we have only to consider some of the cases mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman who moved the resolution to see that some reform is imperatively required. It is not merely that these inquiries before Committees of this House involve the parties concerned in enormous expense, but unquestionably they have had the effect of preventing in recent years many reforms which small local bodies and towns have shrunk from embarking upon. There is one matter which has tended very greatly to increase the expense of local bodies in Ireland coming to this House. They have found that it is not safe to rely exclusively on the undivided attention of eminent English Parliamentary counsel. Our Committees sit for a brief period in the year, and

numbers of them sit at the same time; and thus leading counsel have their attention divided over several Committees. It is found, therefore, impossible, for any consideration or reward, to secure the undivided attention of the leaders of the Parliamentary Bar. But over and above that, they have found by experience that English counsel are at a loss when they come to deal with matters purely local in questions affecting Ireland, and accordingly it has become the practice for years past to engage Irish counsel to aid the English counsel to either oppose or support an Irish Bill. That involves the payment of very large fees to the Irish counsel, because they have to leave all their other cases behind them in Ireland, and are compelled to give their exclusive attention to the work here. But it is not merely on the ground of expense that we are in favour of the reform embodied in the resolution, because there is no division of opinion amongst us in regard to this matter, and I have never heard of any man engaged in commerce or in the professions who is not in favour of it. Take the case of the Railway Amalgamation Bill. For weeks the managers, the principal servants and officials were all detained here from their ordinary business, which they had to entrust to subordinates. And then public men who could have assisted the Committee in their deliberations could not come over here and spend weeks waiting to be called. I do not think it is right to twit the right hon. Gentleman on introducing an abstract resolution. On an occasion of this kind it would be impossible to go into the details of a scheme which would carry out our ideas. We have already had before us the analogy of the Scotch Private Bill Procedure Act. Some of us may think that that is not the thing we should like in Ireland; but it seems to me that the resources of this House should be quite equal to devising some system which would have all the benefits of a Private Bill Committee—I yield to no one in my admiration for that tribunal—and by which those Committees of the House of Commons should meet for a certain period of the year in Ireland, and there take evidence. I should imagine that even in England we might find hon. Members of public spirit and with sufficient time to give to the consideration of Irish Bills. At any rate, the suggestion would get rid of the difficulty referred to by the hon. Member for Peckham, of obtaining tribunals of the same impartiality and ability as the present Committees. Having regard to the fact that Royal Commissions have travelled all over Ireland, and that many Members were glad to take part in these Commissions, I cannot, for the life of me, see how the House could not devise a scheme by which the Committees should sit in Ireland, take evidence, and discuss the Bills there. I hope I am not impeaching on the principle of the right hon. Gentleman's motion; but I would not care to see large measures of railway or municipal reform entrusted to the consideration of local bodies in Ireland, especially having regard to the fact that financial and other considerations might arise, as I suppose they do in England and Scotland. It is for that reason that I make the suggestion, which is perhaps not a new one, that hon. Members of this House returned for English or Scotch constituencies should be formed into small Committees who would go to Ireland and hold their inquiries there on Irish Private Bills. That would secure to the parties concerned, both opposing and supporting, that ability and impartiality which are the characteristics of the Committees of this House. The convenience of the witnesses would be consulted, and the expense of the Committees could be easily defrayed by the State, which expense would be nothing compared with the enormous additional cost that is heaped on local bodies in Ireland, which are compelled even on small sanitary matters to come over to this House with an array of counsel to take part in an inquiry that may last for days. I do trust that the Leader of the House will give some hope and some encouragement to all classes in Ireland, who I again say are unanimous on this question, and who cannot see in it any suggestion of party or political advantage.

*MR. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): This question is of special interest to me, as a director of a great English railway company having Irish connections. There were amalgamation Bills promoted last session by our Irish railway friends which were in the interest of enabling the services to be well performed. Speaking for the Great Western

[illegible]

[illegible] Ireland.

[illegible] The Attorney [illegible] Ireland misrepresents the [illegible] of the Bill passing [illegible] helped it to pass.

Mr. ATKINSON: Then the hon. Member considers that he can best assist Bill by his silence. I acknowledge, frankly, my gratitude for the interest he has taken in Ireland. I do not know whether, if I may use a military metaphor, the pressure on my right hon. friend will be relieved by the hon. Gentleman turning his attention to Irish questions. I do not despair of seeing the hon. Member putting questions to the representatives of the Irish Office, or, perhaps, asking supplementary questions to the questions of the hon. Member for North Kerry. With reference to this abstract resolution, my right hon. friend who introduced it is, as far as the Irish Government are concerned, preaching to the converted and pushing an open door

[illegible] David MacIver

in fact I think I might, with some justice, accuse him of having stolen our clothes, and I do not know that they fit him particularly well. It has been well known for years in Ireland that the present Irish Administration are most favourable to the introduction and passing of a Bill dealing with Private Bill legislation. That was, I think, well known, and even to-night I feel as if someone else was feasting on a dish I had intended for my own delight, because I myself was looking forward to quoting some day some of the figures quoted to-night in favour of the motion. But while every Irishman that I ever met is in favour of the abstract proposition of passing a measure for Private Bill legislation for Ireland, I never met two Irish men who ever agreed on the particular kind of measure that should be passed. That is why an abstract resolution of this kind is really worthless and to a certain extent meaningless. Everyone who has really approached this question with an anxiety to solve it, and who has endeavoured to frame a scheme, has found that the real and substantial difficulty is the creation of the tribunal which is to sit locally to inquire into these matters. I venture to say that, if the different Members who have spoken to-night were asked their opinion as to what kind of tribunal should be created, no two of them would agree. My hon. and learned friend would apparently not agree with the kind of tribunal which my right hon. friend who moved this resolution would approve of. That is the real difficulty. Whether the tribunal should be composed of Members of this House or should be composed partly of Members of this House and partly of Members of the House of Lords, supplemented by individuals selected by some functionary or other, are all matters of difficulty, and under all these circumstances the Irish Government have thought it wise to wait until they see what will be the effect of the operation of the Scotch Act, which will come into operation at the beginning of next year. [Cheers.] Several hon. Members rather cheer that statement; have they any definite opinion themselves? [AN HON. MEMBER: It is not our business.] The hon. Gentleman says it is not his business, and it is very lucky for him it is not, because if it were he possibly would not discharge it to his own satisfaction or to the satisfaction of others. We, at all events, have thought it wise to see how the measure, which is more or less of a tentative character, succeeds in Scotland, and to see what kind of tribunal will be ultimately set up. With the abstract resolution of my right hon. friend the Irish Government are entirely in sympathy; we quite accept it, but we reserve for a future occasion the task of putting it into concrete form.

Question put, and agreed to.

COUNTY COURTS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. MONK (Gloucester): I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill, which, generally speaking, may be said to extend the jurisdiction of county courts in common law cases from £50 to £500, and I hope the House will accord it a second reading, with a view to the measure being sent to the Grand Committee on Law. This Bill differs essentially from the Bill which I introduced in 1898. That Bill proposed to create special circuits as well as special machinery, besides increasing the limit of the jurisdiction, and would have cost the country something like £45,000 a year. The present Bill does nothing of the kind, as it deals simply with the extension of jurisdiction, the limit being reduced from £1,000 to £500, and the proposal for the establishment of special circuits having been eliminated. Last year the Attorney General did not object at all to the principle of the extension of jurisdiction, but objected to the machinery which is now eliminated from the Bill. I had hoped the Government might have brought in a Bill themselves; but in reply to a question which I addressed to the Attorney General the other day, he stated that the Lord Chancellor had neither the time nor the inclination to frame a Bill on this subject. This Bill will not cost the Treasury a single penny. It merely extends the limit in common law cases from £50 to £500; in equity cases from £150 to £500; and in Admiralty cases from £300 to £500. At the present moment in bankruptcy cases the jurisdiction is unlimited. The Bill is promoted by the Association of Chambers of Commerce, consisting of 100 Chambers, who have

unanimously expressed their approval of this Bill at their recent annual meeting, and I believe the Members representing those constituencies will for the most part support the Bill. Under these circumstances, I would urge on the Attorney General the desirability of accepting the Second Reading and allowing the Bill to be referred to the Grand Committee on Law.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

*MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The object of this Bill is to enormously increase the jurisdiction of the county courts, while of course proportionately diminishing the work of the High Court. My hon. friend has said that the Bill has the support of 100 Chambers of Commerce, but I can assure him it has not the support of the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool, and I doubt exceedingly whether it has the support of the Chamber of Commerce of such a large centre of population as Manchester. These great centres of population feel very strongly indeed that nothing——

*MR. MONK: May I point out that a resolution in favour of this Bill was unanimously passed at a meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce this year, when the representatives of the Liverpool Chamber were present.

*MR. WARR: That fact has certainly not been communicated to me; of course, I accept at once what my hon. friend has said, but I received a very strong resolution against the last Bill.

*MR. MONK: This is a different Bill.

*MR. WARR: The effect of this Bill will be to increase the jurisdiction in Admiralty cases from a limit of £300 to £500, and in other cases from £50 up to £500, and to confer jurisdiction in cases in which there is now none, so that in cases of great importance suitors will find themselves deprived of the opportunity of having their cases tried before judges of the High Court, and for juries of twelve accustomed to deal with such cases County Court juries composed of five persons will be substituted. That is not a proposal which will commend itself to commercial bodies in our great cities, and it will not commend itself, I believe, to the Law Societies. Personally, I object to the proposal altogether. I think it is a totally wrong principle. I know there is power of removal, to which I do not attach much importance. I doubt very much whether my hon. friend has sufficiently investigated the class of cases now tried in the High Court. I should imagine that 50 per cent. of them are concerned with amounts under £500. On these grounds I shall strongly oppose the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I feel it is impossible for the House in the few minutes now remaining before midnight to give sufficient attention to a very drastic change in the procedure of our Courts, which will intimately affect the interests of every one of Her Majesty's subjects. Enormous interests are involved, and I think my hon. friend will see that it is unreasonable to ask the House of Commons to affirm a principle of this character without having had time, I will not say to study, but even to read and grasp the effect of this measure.

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Tuesday, 1st May.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS).

Address for "Return showing the estimated position as regards Capital Expenditure of the several Railways and Irrigation Works under construction in India on the 31st day of March, 1900, and the proposed Expenditure thereon during 1900-1901."—(*Mr. Price.*)

Adjourned at two minutes after Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 4th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

HIGHAM FERRERS WATER BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT GAS.

Report [3rd April] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Brymer, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Strachey.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Deer; and Forres; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE).

Petition of the School Board for London, for alteration, and for inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from St. Pancras; and Guildford; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Hull; Southampton; Seer Green; Sheffield; Cheetham Hill; Radford; Ratcliff; Nottingham; and Sabden; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (NO. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (sixteen); and Temperance Committee of the Free Church of Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Canonmill, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Gunnislake; Ratcliff; Nottingham; and Temperance Committee of the Free Church of Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

Copy presented, of Telegrams from Field Marshal Lord Roberts to the Secretary of State for War, reporting (1) a telegram addressed by him to State Presidents of the Orange Free State and South African Republic in reference to the abuse of the White Flag, and (2) the Reply of the President of the Orange Free State [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales for 1897, Part I. (Criminal) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. SPEAKER called the attention of the House to the fact that the provisions of the Bill were identical with those of the Workmen's Compensation Act (1897) Extension Bill which had been read a second time on 21st March last.

Whereupon the Order was discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

TENANTS IN TOWNS IMPROVEMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.) In rising to propose the Second Reading

of this Bill, I do not propose to detain the House for any very lengthened period of time. I am rather in favour of the principle of limitation of speeches, advocated with great ability, if I may be allowed to say so, by an hon. and gallant Gentleman on the other side of the House, and to be consistent, therefore, I propose making my professions to harmonise and correspond with my practice. From my place in these high latitudes I have been able to observe that inexperienced members like myself always receive indulgence when coming forward to address the House, and can at all times rely upon the fact that the worst that can befall them is to get good-humouredly laughed at. The footsteps of the novice, even of the grey-bearded novice, if there be compatibility in the term, are liable to be dogged and followed by mistakes; but in the words I will use I am certain I shall not be harshly judged, but be allowed a generous indulgence. One of the principal things justifying the existence of a legislature is the conscientious desire of its members to frame laws with the honest and earnest intention of making those laws in such a way as to operate for the general good, and so to equalise burdens that no shoulder shall be made to bear more than its due proportion of weight. The Bill which I have the honour now to bring forward in the name and on behalf of the party to which I may say I am proud to belong, proposes to give relief to a large and important class of tenants in towns, who have long been subject, I regret to say, to very harsh and arbitrary treatment. I am free to confess that it is an adopted Bill, a little less marked in its features, perhaps, than if its origin was entirely due to myself, but commanding, all the same, such advocacy as I am able to bestow upon it. It is a matter of history, and therefore need not be dwelt upon by me, how hon. Members on this side struggled and struggled with fairly good success to disembarrass the agricultural industry of Ireland by the removal of heavy obstructions that blocked the progress of the plough and prevented poor Irish farmers from all chance of competing successfully with producers in other countries. Much has still to be done before it can be said that the Irish land question has reached its final solution; but while we are waiting for the complement of our labours in that direction, it is meet and appropriate, at least according to my view, that some effort should be made to remove burdens of an oppressive character whose incidence is certainly very heavy upon thousands of over-weighted tenants in our towns. This Bill is not by any means the first attempt made by Members from Ireland to secure some relief for Irish town leaseholders. Irish Members one after another for years past have vainly tried to impress upon Parliament the necessity of doing something to help town leaseholders. Up to the present time these efforts have been without any beneficial result; but one has realised in moving along that there is great virtue sometimes in repetition, and in keeping in mind the inculcation that, even should success not follow the first effort, whosoever would win a cause must not be dashed by failure, but try again. For years a large, and I may say a deserving, class of town tenants have been at the mercy alike of ground landlords and middlemen, with evil results, traceable, unfortunately, in all our Irish towns. To bring some relief to these tenants is the object of the present Bill, and although I must admit that it is to some extent a hoping against hope to look for a speedy and satisfactory remedy, yet I do not quite despair of seeing some remedial legislation carried to benefit these sufferers. The Irish question—the ever present Irish question—which resembles the poor in that you have it always with you, has many sides and many variations of aspect. It presses itself upon the attention of this honourable House in many ways; and I think I may say, without venturing dangerously far into the unsafe realm of prophecy, that it is likely to remain with you at least until you have recognised and conceded the right which we claim to make our own laws, in our own Parliament, in the capital city of our own country. The question of improving the position of town tenants is by no means a minor phase of the great work of regeneration which the Irish Members have on hand. It bulks largely among the reforms which we regard as vital to the well-being not only of our decaying towns, but of Ireland generally. And did we possess, as we ought to possess, a legislature of our own, no time would be lost in adjusting the evil methods of leasing which now prevail. Many causes contribute to the decline

Mr. Macaleese.

which unfortunately is drying up the springs of prosperity in our Irish towns. Among these are high railway charges and tariffs, which by their prohibitory character destroy all chance of successful competition and strike at the very root of all local industries. But the prohibitory railway rates are perhaps only secondary in their blighting effects to the evils of rack-renting which oppress all the cities and towns of Ireland. Why, of all the melancholy sights to be seen in a tour through our unhappy country, none is so depressing as the decaying aspect of our towns. Without going outside the Division which I have the honour to represent in this House, I could furnish examples of disappearing towns, or perhaps I ought really to say of towns which have disappeared, that are very sad to contemplate. What is now the hamlet or village of Glasslough, in County Monaghan, was fifty years ago a thriving and populous town; but about that period it suited the then lord of the soil not only to check the growth of the community, but to use the arbitrary power with which the law unfortunately armed him, to level the place at one fell stroke and to scatter the inhabitants to the four winds. Enyvale, in the same district, is another town similarly fallen. Its roofless houses may be likened to spectres, with their tottering gables crumbling to ruin; and its deserted street is a standing argument of the utter incapacity of Englishmen to govern Ireland. These are not the only instances I could furnish of ruined towns in the Division I represent, but they are sufficient for my purpose, more particularly as I desire to not unduly prolong my remarks. In the town of Monaghan, where I reside, if a reduced and constantly decreasing population be accepted as an evidence of decay—and I confess I can see no evidence more convincing or conclusive—if something be not done to stay the march of ruin, a few decades will reproduce in our county town what we see with much sorrow in other places, and our streets and squares will be as silent as God's acre itself. And what is most to be regretted in this connection is that what is true of the places I am referring to is still more true in its application to towns in other provinces of Ireland less favoured than Ulster. I will not weary the House, but I advance the general principle that the prosperity of our country is marred by many causes, one of the chief of these being the power enjoyed by town landlords to dictate terms of tenancy which directly lead to the downfall of many honest and deserving traders. I am contemplating the case of the poorer class of tenants, but not those alone suffer from the imperfect state of the law—a state that has come down to us from a time when feudal ideas prevailed universally among legislators, and the Statute-book is but a receptacle of those ideas crystallised. The rich trader and the poor together suffer in this connection, and it is in the interest of both that I ask the House to accept the principle of this Bill. To bring forward examples of the evils which follow the system of leasing in Irish towns would be an easy task. That system was well exposed some years ago—so far back, indeed, as 1886—by the hon. Member for North Mayo, and in the debate at that time* convincing arguments were used and instances advanced of how injuriously this antiquated law worked out for the prosperity of the country. I am not going to wade through the special cases I find reported in that debate, but I may say that exposures were then made which resulted in the appointment of a Committee to investigate the subject, which Committee, however, following many venerable examples, for a time looked wise, but after much palaver flickered out without doing anything practical. Town leases are so many stumbling-blocks in the matter of industry in Ireland, and, indeed, in Great Britain. The powers enjoyed by town landlords to dictate their own terms of tenancy are a fatal barrier to improvements, and until a Bill be carried to change the condition of things now prevailing it is useless, I fear, to look for the prosperity we desire. At the time I refer to it was generally conceded—and, indeed, it is generally conceded still—that to the system of tenancy prevailing Irish towns largely owe their decay; but Parliament does nothing to speed reform. Only yesterday in this honourable House we had the, shall I say, humiliating spectacle of Ministers acknowledging a grievance of the first magnitude in regard to Ireland, and pleading as an excuse for their inaction that they were unable to invent

* For Debate on the Second Reading of the Tenure of Town Houses (Ireland) Bill, 24th February, 1886, see *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cccii., page 1117.

machinery by which redress could be provided. If there be any substance in that excuse, what a commentary it is upon the resources of a Government whose friends claim for it the possession of all the political virtues, and the patriotic ones as well! Under the system which this Bill is designed to revise it was at all times impossible to have any general development of industry. Leases range from twenty-one to 100 years generally, and as the lessee on the expiry of his agreement must walk out and forfeit all improvements which he has made, and all increase of business he may have brought to the premises, or else consent to pay a fine for renewal and an increase of rent as well, hon. Members will easily realise how important it is to make the change for which the Bill provides. This Bill will go some way to remedy this state of things by providing for an arrangement by which lessees may acquire certain reversions and also the freehold of premises by purchase. It is not by any means a one-sided measure, designed to affect lessors injuriously, but simply aims at the erection of a system which, to some extent, may stop the progress of decay Lessor or lessee may avail of its provisions as inclined, and, as in the case of those agricultural tenancies within the embrace of the Land Laws, may have recourse to the Land Commission or the county courts when the parties themselves may be unable to agree as to the amount of the purchase money, the question of title, or any other doubt or difficulty in any transaction under this Bill. I need not point out that measures of this kind, to be dealt with exhaustively, ought properly to be brought forward and pioneered by hon. Members of good experience, for they are not only liable to suffer, but actually do suffer, from falling into hands like my own. However, all things have their compensations, and in this case these are not wanting, for alongside with me are hon. Members whose capable advocacy of this Bill, as I venture to think, will go far to convince the House that the measure is not only desirable but necessary, and that its passage will mark another advance towards the establishment of happier relations between Great Britain and Ireland. Without further trespassing upon the time and patience of the House, I beg to move the Second Reading.

Mr. Mucaleese.

*Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick), in seconding the motion, did not think it necessary to go into any lengthened explanation of the provisions of the Bill, because it would be just so much time lost. Undoubtedly this was one of the most serious questions with which the time of Parliament could be occupied. His reason for saying that the time taken in explaining the Bill would be wasted was that the lawyers in the House would constitute generally a critical element in regard to the drafting of the measure, and when the Bill, if read a second time, was referred to a Committee a great number of its provisions would be changed. It might, however, be stated that the Bill had been drawn by one of the most eminent lawyers in Dublin, with great experience in this line of work, and therefore, as a whole, the Bill was fairly drawn. It could be seen by the provisions of the measure that the promoters were really desirous of being fair to both sides, because if either the landlord or the tenant objected to what was arranged he could summon a jury. The main object of the Bill was to remove certain disabilities under which town tenants laboured at the present moment in Ireland. This question should be looked at from a broad point of view. It was one of public importance, affecting a vast number of the community in the three kingdoms, and in examining this subject the House should not stop short at the anatomy of existing institutions, but should penetrate into the secret functions of what the law ought to do, and its relations to those who are affected by it. The House should revert to the originating condition of things, and get at the root principle. What was really the trend of modern movement? Every Member of the House would admit that at the present time the trend of population was to the aggregation in large numbers in cities and towns. The agricultural population had to a certain extent disappeared from the three kingdoms, and therefore this was a matter of vital importance not alone to Ireland, but also to Great Britain. The system of land monopoly here existing was exceptional, and was in contradistinction to that of any other country in Europe. Unless that system was changed it might ruin England just as it had almost ruined Ireland. According to Tacitus, "Great estates ruined

the empire." It was a long cry from Tacitus to Gladstone; but in 1871 Mr. Gladstone's Commission stated "that on the Continent great estates had almost totally disappeared or were fast melting away." The right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland appeared to think that land nationalisation was rather an insane idea, but God created the land for the people and certainly not for the landlord. The right hon. Gentleman was doubtless a Biblical scholar, but he could not find a single passage in the Bible which stated that the land was created for the landlords. He (the hon. Member) simply desired to make as many people as possible the owners of the soil and of the houses they occupied. The law and customs in England differed entirely from that in any other country in the world, and public opinion required to be educated on this matter, because at present it did not recognise this fact. England was exceptional in regard to a great many things. This country had a railway monopoly, such as was not tolerated in any other State in the world. It had adopted Free Trade—a principle entirely opposed to the trading systems of the rest of the universe. It supported a poor law system unknown elsewhere. In this as in other matters the Britisher had the idea of supremacy—that he was right and all the rest of the world was wrong. Where did all the land legislation come from? It came from the Roman law. The Roman laws were the basis of the civilisation of the present time. The Roman Code by degrees came to be adopted in all Western Europe, with the result that there was in Western Europe that which there certainly was not in Great Britain—namely, a peasant proprietary and ownership of houses. In all places where English law had not penetrated the Roman Code, otherwise known as the Civil Code, absolutely prevailed. What did the Civil Code lay down? It provided that no man should grow rich at another man's expense. What did the system of landlordism in town in Great Britain and Ireland mean? It simply meant that the landlord did grow rich at another man's expense; under the system rack-renting was encouraged, and there were wholesale evictions, the appropriation of property and improvements, and the destruction of business which had been built up by years of toil and labour on the part of the tenants. Reference was often made to the "sacredness of contract," but in this question there was only one man free to contract, and that was the landlord. It was not a case of a contract at all. The tenant was obliged to remain in his premises in order to preserve his business; he had no freedom of contract to go elsewhere, because by so doing his business would be destroyed. This grievance was seriously felt all over Ireland. He (the hon. Member) was doubtless looked upon as a revolutionary character, but in regard to this matter he had presented no less than forty petitions from various towns in Ireland, some of which towns professed the most conservative ideas in general politics. In this matter he was also supported by an association comprising his most determined political opponents. This was not a political question in that sense, but an economical problem calling for an immediate solution. There was a particular reason why the people of Ireland asked for this measure. They could not afford to pay the high rents which Englishmen and Scotchmen were able to bear, as the people of Great Britain were much more prosperous than the people in the cities and small towns of Ireland. Another reason for this Bill was that there had been so-called exceptional legislation in Ireland in regard to the land, and it was felt that town tenants should have exactly the same privileges as were given to agricultural tenants. The agricultural tenants had judicial rents and fixity of tenure so long as that rent was paid, and why should not the town tenant have equal justice? There was a pamphlet on "Overcrowding in Towns" written by Mr. Boulter, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone had written to him—

> "I fully approve of the proposal, and can see no reason why the benefits conferred on Irish farmers with the best results should not be extended to the British workman."

If that was so, why not to the Irish town tenants generally? There was a popular fallacy that a man's house was his castle. It was nothing of the kind. It was a phrase which had grown into a proverb, sanctified by usage, but the real fact was exactly the opposite. A man's house was not his castle. Ninety per cent. of the occupiers of those houses could not claim them as their castles. On the contrary, they were only the sentries of the

commanding officers, the landlords. This question touched the very root of society. The family constituted the home, and the home-life was the real and stable foundation of society and of the State, the centre of civilisation and Christianity. A man's home was sacred whether he be rich or poor, peer or peasant, and to make a happy home was the object of every sensible citizen in this Empire. From that point of view it could be claimed that the subject under discussion affected every family in the United Kingdom, because security in the home was really the basis and foundation of the peace of mind which ought to belong to every man who fulfilled the duties of citizenship. On this subject poetry might be quoted, although it would have very little effect. The House was so material that it looked at nothing except from the business point of view; sentiment was ignored, although sentiment was mainly at the bottom of all men's actions. According to Burns—

> "To mak' a happy fireside clime
> For weans and wife,
> That's the true pathos and sublime
> Of human life."

And a statesman in the highest sense of the word, John Bright, said, "The glory of a nation was in the happiness of its cottage homes." Where were the cottage homes in Ireland except in the labourers' cottages, and why should not the tenants in towns enjoy peace of mind in security of tenure and improvements? But to return to the Civil Code. What had it to say about these town tenants? Irishmen were often accused of disregarding "law and order," but he desired to base all his arguments on law and order, and it was in the interests of law and order that the passage of this Bill was desired. The Civil Code stated that "building land rent must be low." That would be a revelation to tenantry in this country. "The tenure must be in perpetuity if the rent is paid." "Leases of building land having a right of sale, and reserving neither pre-emptions nor right of fine to the landlord." This doctrine might sound rather new, but if by its enunciation knowledge was imparted to legal Gentlemen on either side of the House, doubtless they would be grateful for it. The doctrine, however, was perfectly equitable, because the right of the landlord was safeguarded by the perpetual rent, for the payment of which there was abundant security in the buildings which had been erected by the tenant. On the other hand—and this was a point upon which the greatest stress and emphasis should be laid, because the safety of the people should be the business of the law and of Government—the community could provide for themselves and their families homes of their own, from which they could not be evicted as long as they paid their rent. Further, the value of this holding which they had themselves created could be realised by them if circumstances occurred which rendered it desirable or necessary that they should leave the premises. In view of the fact that this system worked out fairly to both parties, he submitted that, with certain modifications, such a proposal to amend the existing laws should be supported by both sides of the House. This was not a party question, and if the matter were discussed rationally, with toleration, and in a conciliatory spirit, he believed that most men, except those who had enormous personal interests at stake, would be prepared to agree to the necessity of such an Amendment of the law. Since he had been a Member of the House there had been a number of measures introduced from both sides, dealing with the acquisition of workmen's dwellings, leasehold enfranchisement, town tenants, and other matters, all pointing in the one direction. Conservatives always professed to be the champions of property and of the rights of property. If that was so, the man who created the property was entitled to the championship of the Conservatives. This view had been practically endorsed by the present Leader of the House, who on 19th January, 1895, said at Manchester—

> "I have myself been concerned in the passage of a great measure for Ireland, having for its object the advancement of money to enable the tenants to buy their holdings. I regard it as of enormous importance that the number of owners of houses and, if possible, the owners of land, should be multiplied."

The writer of the pamphlet which had been referred to, on the subject of overcrowding, had had communications with a number of eminent persons, including Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Roberts, and Mr. Chamberlain, and nearly all were in favour of this scheme. But such a state of things could only be brought about by some such measure as that now under consideration. Practi-

cally nothing had yet been done by Parliament, but he hoped he would now be supported by the Conservatives up to a certain point. As to the Liberals—there were not many of them present. They professed to be the friends of Ireland, but sometimes when Irish business came on they were conspicuous by their absence from the debate. The Liberals, however, claim to represent progress and development. That being so, he could claim the Liberal votes for this Bill. If, therefore, he could claim both the Liberal and the Conservative votes, what was there to prevent the measure passing into law? But he had been long enough in the House to know that where a measure of genuine reform was concerned, it was exceedingly difficult to get a Government to act. A Government always wanted details of a scheme. But for what purpose were the members of the Government intended? Were they merely ornaments? He contended it was the duty of a Government to deal with every large question such as this to the best of their endeavours, in order that the wants of the people might be satisfied and development and progress ensured. That view ought to be endorsed by every citizen. The House was now engaged in considering practically the terminable leasehold system. This was not merely an Irish grievance. He would quote the points of the arguments of the Leasehold Enfranchisement Society in England—

"That the terminable leasehold system, as regards buildings, is of quite modern origin, and is due, not to any public demand, but to the necessities of owners of settled estates, who could not develop their property except by obtaining enlarged leasing powers from the Legislature.

"That the Legislature never gave its deliberate sanction to the terminable leasehold system, which was introduced by Private Bill legislation, and accordingly never came under the purview of Parliament.

"That the owners of settled estates have made frequent attempts to thrust the terminable leasehold system upon the people of many of the great industrial towns, but have almost everywhere failed, either because their monopoly was not sufficiently complete, or because they could not act in concert, or because the people would not submit to exorbitant conditions.

"That, as regards occupying leaseholders, there is no financial difficulty in converting their holdings into freeholds, paying the ground landlord fair compensation.

"That wherever the terminable leasehold system prevails, sooner or later the middleman, or speculator in the fag end of leases, makes his appearance, whose vicious practices are due not so much to himself as to the system which creates him.

The hon. Member believed, from his experience, that the middleman was much worse than the ground landlord. Although ground landlords used to the full their legal powers, they were not quite so exorbitant as the middlemen in their demands. The pamphlet also stated—

"That dual ownership means divided responsibility, and that the division of responsibility inevitably involves, in the end, neglect and decay."

That was perfectly true, and accounted for so many of the towns in Ireland being in a state of decay. Kingstown was a notable illustration of that fact. The leases in Kingstown would expire in two or three years, and in consequence of the difficulty of obtaining reversions of the leases the whole place was in such a condition that it was a disgrace. That certainly was not a benefit to the landlord any more than to the tenant. The law should be such as to enable both parties to preserve their fair rights and allow the community to develop. The next paragraph of the pamphlet was—

"That at the very outset leasehold tenure compels builders to borrow at higher rates, and consequently to charge inflated rents in any place where freeholds are few and far between."

The hon. Member desired it to be perfectly understood that in advocating this present proposal he was speaking against his own interests, as, outside his business, what little property he possessed consisted in ground rents. He had, however, never advocated, either in the House or out of it, any principle which he was not prepared to have applied to himself. Therefore, though a ground landlord, he believed that ground landlords should bear a reasonable and fair share of the taxation in the locality from which they derived their rents, and he was perfectly willing to bear his share if such a system was adopted. The last paragraph of the pamphlet was as follows—

"That the terminable leasehold system relieves ground landlords from their due share of local taxation, and subjects leaseholders to periodic confiscation, thereby discouraging thrift, enabling ground landlords to compel tradesmen to buy back the goodwill acquired by a lifetime of industry, and destroying the patrimony which a man would otherwise leave to his children."

There was one very important point not dealt with in that pamphlet. The terminable leasehold system was of com-

paratively modern origin. Originally short terms of ninety-nine years had no connection whatever with the building and occupancy of houses, but were used for other sorts and classes of transaction, such as mortgages, by freeholders desirous of retaining their freehold and encumbering as little as possible their freehold interest, or the system was utilised for securing annuities. In former times the limited value of leasehold interests was considered, and rightly so, of little value when compared with the interest in realty or freehold. In fact, at the time it was regarded as only good enough to secure a temporary mortgage loan, and when first used it was looked upon as giving an interest not much greater than that which a banker now regarded as being created by a deposit of title deeds as security for an overdraft or renewal. That was how this terminable leasehold system originated, but it had gradually developed until it had become a national evil common to the three kingdoms. The hon. Member maintained that inveterate customs which had become crystallised into laws that were opposed to public welfare should be superseded by the superior force of law, and it will be necessary to prohibit the operation of those customs if it was shown that they exclusively benefited a certain privileged section of the community at the expense of less favoured individuals, and of the community at large. The national policy ought to be equal justice and equality of opportunity for every member of the State. This question had come up in connection with the local taxation system. In 1886 a Commission was appointed, and the inquiry was resumed by several subsequent Commissions until 1894. About 1,500 pages of evidence were printed, but not a line of legislation resulted. Witnesses were examined from Tipperary, Tralee, Waterford, Queenstown, Kingstown, Dublin, and other places at the early sittings. Extraordinary cases of individual hardship were proved, also instances were given of whole townships about to be appropriated by the ground landlord, who did not contribute to the local municipal rates, yet were enabled under the present law to seize not only the house, but also utilise the roads, sewers, public utilities and material improvements which were created and maintained by the ratepayers, and this enhancement of value made it more difficult for the occupying taxpayer to obtain reasonable terms. But there were State reasons why the power of eviction and appropriation should not be confided to one or a few select individuals. Continental nations did not allow such arbitrary powers to privileged persons. In 1884 the late Lord Randolph Churchill moved for and obtained Reports by Her Majesty's representatives abroad on the system of tenure of dwelling-houses in the countries in which they resided. He (the speaker) had obtained a Return in continuation of those Reports, but it really contained nothing new, and therefore he desired to quote a few extracts from the Reports supplied on the motion of the late Lord Randolph Churchill. Her Majesty's representatives were asked—

"To furnish a report upon the system of tenure of dwelling-houses in the State where you reside, distinguishing houses in towns from houses in the country, whether such houses are generally freehold or leasehold, and whether the system of letting land on long building leases prevails to any extent."

One of the queries was—

"Are such leases confined to the neighbourhood of towns, or are they usual in the country as distinguished from the neighbourhood of towns?"

Mr. Victor Drummond, in his Report on the system of tenure of dwelling-houses in Austria, said—

"When the ground is sold it can be sold in small or large lots for building or other purposes, as the case may be, provided that no public rights are interfered with; the use of the ground sold is entirely left to the purchaser to do what he likes with, the sale being the transfer of proprietary rights. When property is sold for building purposes it rarely sold subject to the reservation of a rent or other annual or periodical payment; in such a case it would not be considered the property of the lessee or tenant until the amount agreed upon for the term is paid."

That was practically the Civil Code reproduced in Austria. The Report also said—

"There is no difference made between town and country; in a case where by chance a personal agreement should occur it would follow the same rule, but leases, as carried out in England, in both town and country are unknown."

Then came the Grand Duchy of Baden—

"Property in small lots for building sites is sold as a rule in Baden at a fixed and definitely stated price, without the intention of sale or purchase as 'building site' forming an essential of the contract."

In Bavaria—

"As 'latifundia' does not exist in Bavaria, where large estates are limited in number, the system of leasing estates and letting land or building plots plays a very subordinate part; whereas in Great Britain the farmers, renters of building plots, and builders form a highly important class.

"Leases for 60, 99, or 1,000 years are unknown in Bavaria.

"As a proof of the extent to which everything in Bavaria favours the principle of separate ownership in landed property (even in miniature), may be mentioned the so-called 'Herbergen' or working-men's dwellings in Munich and its suburbs, in which different floors of the same houses are owned by different people.

"Building land can be legally sold or let on the condi ion that the purchaser or hirer should build houses on it; but land is never let, and very seldom sold on such conditions, since, as a general rule, no necessity exists for them."

Hon. Members might think these were fairy tales, but they were actual Reports from Her Majesty's Consuls abroad, and they showed how absolutely exceptional the British system was as compared with that which obtained over the rest of Europe. In regard to Belgium—

"There exists no distinction in the system of tenure between urban and suburban dwellings in Belgium, as both are governed by the same rules and regulations. Houses are regarded as private property which the owners let for a term to be determined by the parties interested; in the case where there is no agreement in writing the terms of the lease are determined by the usage of the locality.

"Houses are, as a rule, freehold property. Leaseholds exist only to a very limited extent, and are tending generally to disappear.

"The creation of ground plots for building purposes has only lately come into vogue, and this practice only exists in Brussels; the system was first introduced by a French building contractor, who erected houses on sites situated on the central boulevards, which are the property of the municipality."

The Report from Denmark stated—

"It will be seen that in both cases such houses are almost invariably freeholds, or 'arvefaest' (hereditary tenures), of which I have given an explanation."

These Reports showed that in the majority of countries the system was absolutely unknown. The Danish Report later on explained that this hereditary tenure bore some resemblance to Ulster tenant right and to the "emphyteuta" of Roman law. As to leasing land for building purposes, the Report stated—

"The leasing of land for a term of years conditionally on its being built over is altogether foreign to Danish practice.

"In towns, as in the country districts, the practice of erecting tenements on leaseholds may be said to be unknown in Denmark. The fee simple of the land having been purchased for sum down, the landlord either builds himself or re-sells the freehold for building purposes."

In regard to the condition of things in France, the Report stated—

"Since the Revolution of 1789 all property in France, whether urban or rural, is freehold ('franc-alleu'), that is to say, so long as there is no contravention of the law as regards the welfare of the community at large, the right of owners of property to deal with it as seems best to them is free and absolute.

"In France property can be sold, and is not unfrequently sold, in small lots, so as to enable persons to build houses on it. These sales may be unconditional, in which case the purchaser is bound by such restrictions only as are of usual application to buildings of all kinds, and refer to the character of the work done, to sanitary arrangements, and to the consideration due to neighbours.

"Instead of being sold in building lots, land is sometimes let for a term of years, upon condition that houses are built on it; that an annual or other periodical rent is paid by the lessee; and that at the end of the term the houses should become the property of the landlord."

The next Report was from Germany—

"Plots of ground, leaving out of consideration cases where they are leased for temporary purposes for specified terms, can only be sold as freehold property.

"The old 'institution' of heritable leases ('Erbpacht'), ceding the usufruct of a piece of ground in perpetuity in return for a yearly rent was abolished in the year 1850."

Therefore the system which it was desired to uphold in this country had been absolutely abolished in Germany. Further—

"The law places no restriction on the subdivision at will of such ground into any number of larger or smaller lots, or on the sale of such lots."

Even since then there had been a great advance; and why?

"As a result of thirty years painstaking thought and steady labour, the new German Civil Code recognises the legal conception based upon the consideration of the duties which an individual owes to the community, over the arrogant idea which lays stress on the absolute right of property-owning members of society. In Germany it is now laid down that in almost every case judges are given more extensive discretionary powers than heretofore to interfere with rights, power, and property.

"In view of the fact that the vast majority of those who live in towns must be tenants in the nature of things, particular care has been taken to neutralise the advantages possessed by the owners of houses and building sites."

In this country the legislation was in exactly the opposite direction; instead of taking care of the tenants this country

always took care of the landlords. In Germany, also, the custom with regard to leases was unknown. Then came the Report from Greece—

"The system in regard to tenure of dwelling houses which is almost universally followed throughout this kingdom is that of freehold. This system may be said to prevail absolutely in the country, and also with few exceptions in the towns.

"The practice of letting ground on building leases is as yet unknown in Greece.

"In towns, as in the country, lots are sold unconditionally. Should the purchaser of a lot intend to build thereon, the only restrictions which are imposed on him are that he should observe certain regulations which may be laid down by the town architect or the chief police in regard to alignment and sanitary provision.

"Houses when leased are usually let for a year; occasionally for three or four years, the rent being paid quarterly in advance. The landlord has the right to eject and seize all goods in the house in case of non-payment of rent. In such cases the landlord is considered first creditor.

"Freehold property is the almost universal custom.

"I may mention that in the cases of houses which are let the landlord is bound to keep the house in repair and to pay all taxes and rates. Landed and household property is sold in Greece by a simple notarial act, without other formalities."

In the Grand Duchy of Hesse the practice was almost the same. In Italy—

"Property is sold in small lots for building houses thereon.

"The system of stipulating a rent or other annual or periodical payment has been very much abandoned, and owing to facilities afforded by the laws of the country for redeeming such rents, which are called 'canone,' or 'censo,' it is generally the practice to pay off these rents created in former times, so as to make the property freehold.

"The stipulations under such contracts, called 'emphiteosis' depend upon the covenants made by the parties, or in default of special covenant the general rules laid down in the Code Civil, Article 1556 and following, are applied. Certain clauses, however, are binding upon all contracts of this kind."

The principal point in connection with Italy to which the hon. Member desired to direct attention was the following—

"Inasmuch as the Italian law enables tenants, under an 'emphiteosis,' to redeem the rent by paying an amount of money equivalent to twenty times the amount of the yearly rent, and, if the rent is payable in kind, the value is to be calculated at the average market price of the produce during ten years then proceeding, it follows that a contract of 'emphiteosis,' which was originally intended for the amelioration of the property, by building or otherwise, is reduced to the simple payment of a certain yearly interest at 5 per cent. on a fixed nominal sum of money, which sum of money is not easily to be realised by means of conveyance, it will not increase in proportion, as the value of the property may be rising, and it will be liable to depreciation in proportion as the value of money decreases.

"Long leases in the ordinary form for any period above thirty years are not permitted."

In the Netherlands—

"Land is constantly sold both in small and in large plots for building cases, and in such cases, almost without exception, unconditionally, so that both the land itself and the houses or other buildings erected thereon by the purchaser become his absolute or freehold property.

"It may indeed be assumed as a general rule that property in land or houses in the Netherlands is held by the proprietor as a freehold, no limited ownership, such as copyhold and others which exist in England, being known in this country.

"I am assured that the system of letting or hiring land on building leases finds no favour in this country, and may be said to be almost, if not absolutely, unknown here."

In Norway—

"Land is let at an annual ground rent for building purposes, either for a term of years or in perpetuity. In the latter case the conditions of lease are not very different from those mentioned in the answer to Query 1—namely, that sales are made both unconditionally and at a perpetual annual rent. On the expiration of the terms of a lease for a specified number of years the tenant remains owner of the house, which he is at liberty to remove."

The next Report was from Portugal—

"The system of letting land on long building leases is practically unknown in Portugal. Houses are either freehold, leasehold, or held by 'aforamento' or 'emphyteosis.'"

The Report from Roumania stated—

"The legislation of this country being based on that of France the sale of lots of land for building purposes is entirely unconditional, and reservations of rent are totally unknown."

The next country dealt with was Russia—

"If by freehold is to be understood tenements the owners of which are at the same time the owners of the ground, it may be safely asserted that tenements in general, and especially in towns, are freehold.

"It would also appear that the system of letting land on long building leases does not prevail in Russia."

In Poland—

"The system of leasehold obtains only in the towns, but it is scarcely known, and is never more than a peppercorn rent—a few kopecks."

In Servia—

"Land sold for building purposes is sold unconditionally. No houses are built except on freehold ground.

"It follows naturally that it is a most unusual thing for the purchaser of the land sold for building purposes to bind himself by

any covenants restricting him from dealing with it as he likes."

As to Spain—

"Absolute freehold is the tenure which most generally prevails throughout the greater part of the Spain of to-day, whether as regards lands or buildings, country or town."

In regard to Sweden—

"The system of letting land on long building leases cannot be said to prevail to any great extent in Sweden.

"The law prescribes absolutely nothing as to the use of the ground, and the purchaser is free to deal with it as he likes.

"The usual term for ground leases in Sweden is fifty years, but contracts for shorter periods are frequent, also for the lifetime of the lessee and of his wife if he be married.

"In the large towns there are no ground leases, the properties are freehold."

The Report from Switzerland stated—

"In the first place, it appears that the English notion of degrees of estate in land is not only absent from the Swiss law, but is almost incomprehensible to the Swiss themselves. Absolute ownership is the only condition known to them, and they possess no ideas of such tenures as exist in England, namely, building leases for ninety-nine years, copyhold, estate in tail, and so forth. The question of farm leases is a separate matter. These are in general originally made for short periods, and not infrequently renewed from year to year.

"No such leases obtain anywhere in Switzerland."

In regard to Turkey—

"Property which was alienated from the domain land and converted into 'vakonf' either by the Sultans of the time being or by others under the Sovereign's sanction. As this kind of 'vakonf' is nothing else but the appropriation by the Government of a portion of the public revenue, such as the tithes and ground rents, to some special object, it cannot strictly be called 'vakonf.'

"Property is generally sold in small lots, so as to enable persons to build houses thereon.

"Such leases are rare in towns, but more rare in the country as distinguished from the neighbourhood of towns."

They thus had the fact that in Turkey to-day absolutely more favourable terms were given to the Turkish tenant than the English or Irish tenant could get from his landlord. He need not go any further afield in order to prove his case. He trusted that the House would take into consideration the arguments he had brought forward. He hoped he had shown conclusively that the law now existing in England, Ireland, and Scotland was opposed to the general run of the law all over the civilised world, and that it was contrary to the general welfare of the community that a class of privileged persons, through the agency of statutes partially manufactured in that House and sanctioned by another Chamber, and insidiously converted into custom, should be able to exercise the powers to which he had referred. At the present moment the ground landlords in villages, towns, and cities throughout the three kingdoms had it in their power, on the termination of a tenancy, to evict the tenant, to confiscate his improvements, and to destroy his business, unless he was willing to submit to any terms, however exorbitant, that might be imposed upon him. Such a state of things ought not to be permitted by any legislature which had at heart the welfare of the community and the development of its prosperity. Those who came into direct contact with the people were well aware that the greater the prosperity of the tenant, the better able he was to pay his rent, and he, therefore, trusted that hon. Members, bearing this in mind, would be willing to deal with this question in a manner which would be mutually advantageous to both landlord and tenant. He had great pleasure in seconding the motion, and he trusted the Government would give its support to a scheme which must be productive of peace and prosperity, and which must add to the permanence of the progress of the community at large.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Macaleese.*)

*MR. SMITH-BARRY (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon): We have had a very long and interesting speech from the hon. Member, but it has travelled over so wide a range of subjects that I fear we may possibly have forgotten by this time that the measure on behalf of which he spoke is called "The Tenants in Towns Improvement Bill for Ireland." I am very glad the hon. Member has widened the debate, and has admitted that the Bill is not an Improvement Bill for town tenants at all, but is a large, sweeping, and comprehensive Bill for leasehold enfranchisement. It is a Bill which, whether leasehold enfranchisement would be proper or improper, and whether we approve of it or not, the House could not possibly be expected to pass under the circumstances of to-day. The hon. Member has said that the object of the Bill is to enable occupiers, but not appa-

rently also the owner of the fee simple, to acquire the rights of the middlemen. But such a measure should be reciprocal, and if the occupier is to have the right of buying out these interests, ought not the ground landlord to be granted an equal privilege? The Bill would enable any occupier of a small dwelling to acquire the fee simple by purchase at a price to be fixed by the court named in the Bill. But the measure is not limited in its operations to towns, and, as I read it, it would enable any person occupying a house with an acre of land in any part of the country, whether in or out of a town, to purchase his holding compulsorily in the same way as if he were living in the middle of a large town which was terribly overcrowded. Then how is this transfer of property to be made? As the hon. Member told us, the tenant or occupier is to serve a notice upon the Land Commission, and that body will thereupon send down Sub-Commissioners to look into the case and to fix a price which is to be paid for the holding. If the property is under the value of £300 the matter goes before the county court judge. Either party is to have the right to call in a county court jury to assess the price. Where the value is over £300 the Land Sub-Commission is to deal with the case. What kind of tribunal is it that is to decide such questions as these? I do not wish for the moment to speak disrespectfully of the Irish Land Sub-Commissioners, although I have had to do so very often in the past, and possibly may have to do it again in the future. But I may say this, that they are not a body which has earned the confidence of the landlords, nor, so far as I can judge, have they the confidence of the tenants.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): They are your own friends.

*MR. SMITH-BARRY: They were appointed because they are supposed to have some knowledge of agricultural land. But now it is proposed to ask them to consider, discuss, and assess most valuable rights in relation to town houses. That is one of the objections I entertain to the way in which this Bill is framed. There is another. I observe that there is no provision whatever that the person whose property is to be compulsorily taken shall have given him anything extra on account of the sale being compulsory. Now, we know that in all cases of compulsion, where sales are made to railway companies or other public bodies, something extra is given on account of the sale being compulsory, and I cannot help thinking, from the general tenure of this Bill, that a similar provision has been deliberately and expressly omitted from it. It is compulsory, too, that the middleman or the landlord shall accept the price which is put upon the holding by the court, but apparently the lessee is in a far more favourable position, and is not bound to accept the decision of the court. If he thinks the bargain is a good one, he will take it and go on his way rejoicing; but if, on the other hand, he arrives at the conclusion that it is not sufficiently advantageous, he can slip out of it, and the only penalty he incurs is that he cannot again apply to the court for a period of five years, when, and only when, he must pay up the cost of the first trial. I think the Bill itself is badly drafted, and on that ground alone ought to be rejected. The hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division has admitted that this is not really an Irish question. I entirely agree with him. The question of leasehold enfranchisement is a question which must be dealt with as a whole. It is a question which does not concern Ireland in any greater degree than it concerns England and Scotland. The system of tenure in the three countries is practically identical; in some places the leases may be longer, and in others they may be shorter; customs may vary, but the principle is the same throughout. The hon. Member for North Monaghan, who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, tried to make out that there was some analogy between agricultural tenancies and town holdings. But the great reason why this House dealt so drastically with the Irish landlord was because it was shown that the customs with regard to agricultural holdings in Ireland differed widely from those prevailing in Great Britain. The hon. Member has quoted at length from a large number of pamphlets, as well as from the evidence given before the Town Holdings Committee, as to the difference of customs and systems of land tenure all the world over. He has said that the leasehold system in this country was one which never had any sanction at law. I will tell him why it exists here, and why it does not exist in other countries. In the United

Kingdom it has grown up gradually to meet the public convenience, and it has never been deemed necessary specially to legalise it. A system has been created which has proved convenient to all the parties concerned, and I submit that this House and the country should be very slow to change it. The hon. Member quoted a good many things, but he did not quote the Report of the Town Holdings Committee, which was appointed at the instance, I believe, of the hon. Member for North Mayo in the year 1886, which sat during the years 1886, 1887, and 1888, and which reported in 1889. There was an enormous amount of evidence submitted to that Committee. I believe something like 103 witnesses were examined, and in their General Report the Committee say—

"The Committee agree with the opinion that the plan of letting land for building upon an annual rent, which is a leading feature of the leasehold system, possesses considerable advantage and convenience; and they have, on the whole, come to the conclusion that, except in places where the sentiment of the district is strongly opposed to leaseholders, houses are built and building estates are developed more rapidly on the leasehold system than on that of freehold purchase, and that in consequence of the large supply of houses thus caused, occupiers obtain the benefits of lower rents and greater opportunities of selection."

That is one conclusion that this Committee came to. Among other things in their Report they quoted the opinions of a great many gentlemen who gave evidence before them—men of very large and wide experience, who were able to speak authoritatively on the subject. They quoted, for instance, from the evidence of Mr. Vigers, a man of enormous experience in the valuation of house property in London and elsewhere. He said—

"My experience leads me to the conclusion that houses built upon leaseholds, with the supervision of the freeholder and his agents, are better built, as a rule, than those built upon freeholds; and where there is a freehold and leases are granted, the property is under supervision, and in my experience does not get into such a very bad state as it does when it is in the hands of very small freeholders."

The Committee quoted that opinion, and apparently thoroughly endorsed it. There is a great deal of matter in that Report which I must pass over, but there are one or two subjects to which I feel I ought to refer. In the General Report there is a review of advantages and objections. The Committee say—

"It will be seen from our previous observations that we are not of opinion that leasehold enfranchisement would, on the whole, have much practical effect in improving the quality of houses built. We think that under some circumstances, as where terms of leases are very short, or (as under the life system) of uncertain duration, it would have this effect. On the other hand, we are of opinion that the oversight of the ground landlord on well-managed estates undoubtedly has in this respect a beneficial operation. Upon a general view, our conclusion is, as before stated, that the quality of building depends upon other circumstances than those arising from tenure. Nor are we satisfied that the bad state of repair of much house property in large towns, or the unsanitary condition of many of the dwellings of the working classes is to any large extent to be attributed to the leasehold system. As regards excessive rents, we are not inclined to think that leasehold enfranchisement would have any appreciable effect in reducing them, and, as before stated, we think that the leasehold system rather facilitates the building of houses and so increases the supply."

A special part of the Report is devoted to Ireland, and this being an Irish Bill, I think I am justified in quoting one or two extracts. For instance, I read—

"The case of Ireland being in some respects different from that of England and Wales, it has appeared convenient to deal separately with this branch of our inquiry. At the same time, most of the general considerations bearing on the questions referred to us, and the arguments for and against the existing system, and the remedies proposed for the evils alleged to exist under it, apply to a large extent to the countries in common. We have not, therefore, repeated these considerations and arguments at length, but have thought it sufficient to indicate in what respects they are, in our opinion, applicable to the special circumstances of Ireland as shown by the evidence laid before us."

Then they go on to say—

"Of the remedies proposed, a measure of leashold enfranchisement, though accepted by many of the witnesses, is also stated, even by some of those favourable to it in theory, as not likely to assist the working classes, and even the poorer shopkeepers, on account of their inability to procure the money necessary for the purchase of the reversion, unless it is advanced by the State."

I think these constitute fairly conclusive answers to a great deal of what was said by the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division. I have, however, one more quotation—

"With regard to the remedies suggested, the Committee, on reviewing the evidence laid before them, do not recommend the adoption of a measure of leasehold enfranchisement for Ireland. Such a measure has not practi-

cally been advocated as likely to confer any considerable benefit on the working classes, partly, no doubt, in consequence of the comparative unimportance in most parts of Ireland of manufactures and of mining and other similar industries; and it has not been urged that any number of the working classes would be likely to avail themselves of the powers of purchase proposed to be conferred."

The Report suggests that Ireland in regard to this matter must be treated in the same way as England, and that should be quite sufficient in itself to induce this House to have nothing to say to the Bill. I would especially like to call the attention of hon. Members opposite to the fact that this Report was adopted by twelve votes as against seven, and that included in the majority was an Irish Nationalist whose name is very much revered and carries with it a great deal of weight with hon. Members opposite, even at the present time. I refer to Mr. Biggar, who not only voted for the adoption of the Report, but voted with those who are opposed to the principle of leasehold enfranchisement in nearly every division which took place while the Report was under consideration. Mr. Biggar was a man who, upon social questions which were not inscribed upon the Nationalist banner, was very apt to take sound, independent views, and I think the fact that he was a strong supporter of the Report should not be forgotten by hon. Members opposite. We have heard a good deal from the hon. Member and others as to the advantages of the freehold system over the leasehold system. We have heard a good deal about overcrowding—a very big question, no doubt, which will have to be dealt with one of these days. We have heard also something as to the quality of the houses built under the two systems. But it has never been possible to show, so far as I know, that the class of house built anywhere under the freehold system is better than that erected under the leasehold system. There have, however, been most remarkable instances in different parts of the country where houses built under the freehold system have deteriorated, and where whole districts have become worse. There have been two celebrated cases in London—at Soho and Bedfordbury. At Soho, at the end of the last century, a part of the Portland estate was sold to the small freeholders, and that district, instead of being one of the best residential parts of the metropolis, has gone down and down until it is possibly one of the worst parts of London. Again, in the case of Bedfordbury, this was originally part of the Bedford estate. Years ago it was alienated, with the result that it became one of the worst parts of London. It became a very Alsatia. It was a mass of little miserable streets and dens, and its condition became so great a public scandal that at last the Board of Works had to buy it up, and they sold it to the Peabody trustees. It has been stated that large rents are exacted under the leasehold system. Let us see what was the evidence given before the Town Holdings Committee on that point. I will confine my remarks to one case—the town of Southport. Now, that town may be divided practically into two parts, one half being under the freehold system and the other half under the leasehold system. The leasehold sites are double the size of the freehold sites, while the rent, or its equivalent, of the leasehold sites is only about half that of the other. That is a very remarkable fact, and if it be the case in a town in Lancashire, inhabited by cool, hard-headed people, is it not still more likely to be the case in towns in Ireland, where people, bidding against one another, are apt to lose their heads and to enter into bargains which they subsequently regret? Now let me give two Irish instances. Evidence was given before the Town Buildings Committee with regard to both Tipperary and Queenstown. Tipperary, like Southport, is about equally divided under the two systems, and apparently there is no special reason why one portion of the town should develop more rapidly than the other. But I would ask anybody who knows the town if it is not a fact, that the part which is under the leasehold system is not by far the most prosperous of the two portions? Again, in the case of Queenstown, that portion which has been alienated from the leasehold system is the very part where the slums are to be found, where there is little business done, and where the most disreputable people are quartered. I ask, who is likely to be benefited by this measure of leasehold enfranchisement? Will it beneficially affect the traders? I cannot think it will, because they could more profitably use their capital in the development of their businesses, and would thereby get a far higher rate of

interest for it than they would if they sank it in purchasing their freeholds. The hon. Member suggested that one effect of the Bill might be to make the working man a more law-abiding citizen. Well, if we can make the Irish working man more law abiding and more conservative in the best sense of the word—and I am not using the word in a political sense —if we can make him more contented and prosperous, I, for one, shall be very happy to do everything in my power to bring that about. But is it to the interest of working men as a body that they should become the owners of their dwellings? A working man must live near his work, and so long as his work remains in the one place it is all very well, and it is to his advantage that he should own his dwelling. But suppose the work goes away and he has to follow it, then is it to his advantage that he should be saddled with a freehold house, which he may not be able to sell for what he gave for it, because the prosperity of the town is dwindling? Is it not far better for him to be free to follow his work, rather than to be tied down to one place? Unfortunately in Ireland, as we know, industries which are started do not always succeed. We have seen creameries started and fail. Let us hope that all these creameries will prosper, but, unfortunately, a great many of them do not prosper. I have no doubt many hon. Members opposite are aware of what happened in Portlaw. A factory was established there, and quite a considerable town of working men's houses was built, but not one in ten is now occupied. The factory is, I believe, shut up, the place is absolutely ruined, and the workmen have had to seek employment elsewhere. Where would these men be if they had bought these houses and had to remain in them, work or no work? As regards the middlemen, I do not think they would get any valuable consideration for the rights which they would be asked to surrender under this Bill. I am not prepared necessarily to defend all middlemen in the country, or to say that the manner in which they have conducted their properties has always been to the public benefit; but I would remind the House that a great many of them, especially in the small towns, are by no means rich men. In many cases interests are held by trustees for widows and orphans, and if they are compelled to compulsorily surrender their rights for what would probably be very inadequate compensation a very cruel hardship would necessarily occur. Moreover, the money that would be received would have to be invested elsewhere. We heard the other day during the debate on the Financial Relations question that money which ought to belong to Ireland was being invested in England and elsewhere, because there were so few means of investment in Ireland. But the compensation received for property under this Bill would necessarily swell the stream of money flowing from Ireland to this country. Then again the Bill would not be to the benefit of the ground landlords. We know the feeling with regard to landlords in Ireland generally, and it is very unlikely that they would get any fair play.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Would not the Land Commission give them fair play?

*MR. SMITH-BARRY: There is a difference of opinion between the hon. Member and myself on that point which I need not now discuss. The effect of this Bill must be that the ground landlords would lose control over the general mass of their property, which at the present moment I maintain they exercise with very great advantage to the community. If holdings are picked out here and there all possible schemes of improvements will be prevented in future. In my own estate I know how very important it has been to be able to acquire houses from time to time in order to pull them down for the benefit of the rest of the estate. I do not think this Bill is in the interest either of the towns or the general community. It is bound to check building operations. Who is going to build houses on a large scale if they are liable to be expropriated at prices to be fixed by the county court or the Land Commission? If all freedom of sale and purchase is to be taken away it is practically certain to check building operations, and the result will be that no building will take place except on plots of land which have been purchased. Land will have to be purchased, and in many cases it would be exceedingly difficult to acquire it. In Ireland the great mass of the estates are settled estates, and the landowner has no power to sell, although he may have power to lease. The expansion

of towns will necessarily be arrested, and the last case of the towns in Ireland will be worse than the first. There is practically no demand at all for this Bill in Ireland. The evidence before the Committee showed that there was a much stronger demand for it in England than in Ireland. Possibly fortified with the opinion of the Committee, the party opposite put down leasehold enfranchisement as one of the items of the Newcastle programme. Since then, however, if it has not been entirely given up it has certainly been dropped out of the programme, and it is perfectly clear that hon. Gentlemen opposite have discovered that leasehold enfranchisement is not by any means a popular thing in England. We are all anxious for the improvement of the Irish towns, but what is wanted is more capital, and more security. If the towns are to be improved let the urban authorities impartially put in force the powers given to them under the Sanitary Acts. Let them condemn hovels and rookeries, let them provide good water, drainage and lighting, let them build artisans' dwellings in suitable places where they are necessary, but do not let the rights of property be further interfered with. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): Anyone who has read the various clauses of the Bill cannot fail to be struck with the extreme contrast between the moderation of the speech of the hon. Member who introduced it and the extravagant and revolutionary character of the Bill itself. The hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin referred in the course of a very discursive but interesting and good-humoured speech to the proceedings of the Parliamentary Committee which considered this question, but he neglected to tell the House that in the forefront of the final Report of that Committee, which was issued in 1889, is to be found the following conclusion—

"The legal right of the ground landlord to resume possession of the land and buildings at the termination of the lease is incontestable, and is, in the opinion of the Committee, the only basis on which the respective rights of lessor and lessee can be dealt with."

That is in the forefront of the Report, and yet the proposition of the Bill is in direct contradiction to that conclusion. In violation of the rights of property, it proposes to legalise on the part of every lessee a breach by him of the contract which, either by express words or implication, is contained in every lease—namely, that on the determination of the lease the lessee will surrender the property to the lessor. The arguments adduced to support such a strong invasion of the rights of property, so far as I have been able to follow them, were briefly as follows. It was said that where a tenant during his lease constructed improvements in the premises, he had on the determination of the lease to elect either between eviction from the premises and the confiscation of his improvements, or submit to an exaggerated rent, the increase in which represented the value of his own improvements. Now, in the first place, I think it is an exceptional case in which, on the determination of a lease, the landlord, when the tenant is willing to take a new lease, imposes an increased rent which in any way amounts to a fine upon the tenant's improvements. I think it is often forgotten that when, on the determination of a long lease, the lessor, as a consideration for a renewal of the lease, requires an increased rent, the consideration of that is not the improvements effected by the tenant, but is the increase which the natural course of events has added to the value of the site. We are all familiar with many cases—and this is especially so in the city of Dublin—in which, owing to the accident of the particular determination of business or commerce to districts which in former years had little or no value, sites have suddenly acquired a high commercial value. In Belfast municipal improvements have opened up and developed districts for business purposes which, before these were executed, were not suited for business purposes, and the immediate consequence was an enormous increase in the ground value of the premises, in no way to be attributed to the efforts of the tenant, and to the benefit of which, on the determination of the lease, the landlord, both in law and justice, is entitled to obtain his fair share. It is also suggested that in the case of expiring leases there is a tendency on the part of the lessee, at the fag end of the lease, to allow the premises to get out of repair, and that that is an injury not only to the landlord but to the community. The Committee of 1889 dealt with this, and suggested that to meet the case of a tenant who

during the currency of his lease had executed improvements which *bona fide* increased the letting value of the premises, and also with a view to put an end to the system of dilapidated premises during the fag-end of a lease, legislation of a certain character was desirable; but their suggested legislation never took the form of the enfranchisement of the leaseholders. The furthest the Committee were prepared to go was to suggest that in the case of all future contracts the lessee or tenant on the determination of his lease should be entitled to compensation for improvements erected during the currency of the lease, provided they added to the letting value of the holding. But the proposals contained in the present Bill go much further. They necessarily involve, if they mean anything, which I very much doubt, that the meaning should be taken from the purposes mentioned in the preamble—the enfranchisement of existing leases, enabling the lessees not only to acquire the intermediate interests, but to extinguish that of the owner of the property. That is open to the observation, in the first place, that it is a very violent invasion of the rights of property, and is practically legalising at the hands of one section of the community the confiscation of the property of another section. Unfortunately we in Ireland are not unfamiliar with that form of legislation, but I do not know that the example of the past is so encouraging as to induce this House to extend that principle much further. At any rate, I can hardly conceive that it is likely to conduce to the prosperity and welfare of any nation that time after time successive Governments should encourage one section to confiscate the property of another section of the community. But, in the second place—and this is a consideration of much more importance to hon. Members who are familiar with this process of legal confiscation—I cannot imagine anything more calculated to retard the improvement and development of towns, not merely in Ireland, but in England and Scotland, than any system of this kind which would stereotype, in the hands of the present occupants, the existing condition of their houses. In past times, as well as in the future, landlords are entitled to look forward to—and, as matter of fact, they do anticipate—the period when the leases will fall in, and when they will be enabled by a uniform scheme of development to improve the buildings and develop the town. The fact that a very large portion of the area is in the hands of one landlord, the fact that the leases will generally fall in at the same time, is generally availed of to carry out a broad scheme by which the architecture of the buildings is improved, to the ornament of the town. But a curious element of this Bill is that it enables any individual occupant of one house to buy that house and leave the landlord with the balance of his property in such a form and condition that it would be impossible for him to develop it on any uniform or co-extensive plan. Further than that, the power conferred on the ind vidual occupier to acquire the fee-simple of the house he occupies will unquestionably interfere with much-required and long-wished-for public improvements and the extension of artisans' dwellings. Suppose that, in one of these blocks occupied by lessees where leases are about to expire, this provision is availed of by one or two lessees, they would by that means be enabled to defeat any scheme of general improvement which the landlord of the entire block was prepared to adopt when the leases fell in in the natural course of events. I most sincerely congratulate the hon. Member for North Monaghan, who introduced this Bill, on the very able and moderate way in which he did so, but we have at the same time to deal with it in the light, not of what the hon. Member said in introducing it, but of what the measure itself proposes. There is one remarkable defect in the Bill, and that is that it is entirely one-sided in its proposals. What I mean to say is, that while the occupying tenant or lessee can, by compulsion, acquire the property not merely of the intermediate lessor but also of the owner in fee, there is no power in the owner in fee to compel the purchase of the leases. If there are a number of tenants holding a particular block of premises, each under a separate lease, any one lessee may pick out a small lot, another may do the same, and so in that way the landlord's property may be cut up piecemeal. The effect of that would necessarily be to greatly diminish in the hands of the owner the value of his property. It is exactly the same as if there were to be introduced into these leases an option on the part of the tenant to buy without any obligation on his part to purchase. Anyone who knows anything of the real property market must admit that if there is an option on the

part of the tenant to buy even against the will of the lessor that unquestionably diminishes the value of the whole of the lessor's property. But another fact has to be borne in mind. In many of the towns and cities of England and Scotland, as well as Ireland, ground rents are one of the principal sources of income of the corporations. Take the case of Liverpool. According to the Report of 1889 there were in Liverpool leases which were about to fall in to the value of twelve millions; while the annual income of the University of Oxford from leaseholds is about £150,000. I know myself that in the city of Dublin a large portion of the property which belongs to the ratepayers consists of property which they hold in fee, the leasehold rents from which go to the reduction of the rates. In the case of the city of Dublin there never was any difficulty as between the city and their tenants in the former obtaining, on the determination of a long lease, a substantial increase of rent from the occupying tenant together with an obligation to erect a considerably improved building in place of the old structure. The striking instance given by the right hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill as to what would happen in portions of a district held by occupiers in fee is exactly what one would expect; because so long as occupiers in such districts hold their premises in fee they have lost all incentive or even power to improve the condition of their surroundings. They are only interested in the houses they own, and have no interest in improving the condition of the houses surrounding them. The contrary is the case where the property belongs to the ground landlord, because as the leases fall in, he is able to replace the antiquated and dilapidated structures by more modern buildings; and therefore it is natural that in the instances given by my right hon. friend the freehold portions of the district he cited became practically slums. Now, the preamble of the Bill suggests that the object is to facilitate the acquisition in fee by working men of the houses they occupy. The hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of the city of Dublin, who has devoted many years to this matter, and is therefore calculated to speak as an authority on the subject, stated, with his usual candour, that he was an advocate of land nationalisation. I can only say that any hon. Member who approaches this subject impressed with ideas of land nationalisation is not likely to impress his views on the majority of this House. The preamble says that it is intended to secure for working men the fee simple of the houses they live in. I have already referred to the conclusion which forms the basis of the Report of the Committee of 1889—namely, that in their opinion the right of the landlord, on the determination of a lease, to get back both house and land was incontestable; but I would like also to inform the House what was the conclusion of the majority of that Committee on this question of working men becoming the owners in fee simple of the houses they live in. Here it is—

"The suggested leasehold enfranchisement would not materially benefit the working classes either in London or in most other large towns."

The secretary of the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Company gave a remarkable piece of evidence before that Committee. He informed them that in all their dealings with working men who had acquired or sought to acquire the fee simple of the houses in which they lived, he found that in twelve to twenty-five years the houses so sold had come back to the company. And really that is inevitable. When we consider that working men must necessarily live near the locality of their work, and that the fluctuations of trade may drive them from one neighbourhood to another in search of work, we at once see that working men would never care to become owners in fee of the houses in which they live, except in the possible case where their work would be permanent. I would refer to the well-known case of the slate quarries in Wales. Permanent work will naturally attract permanent residents; but in other cases it is impossible to expect that working men will either care or desire to spend a substantial sum in the permanent acquisition of homes which they may be compelled to leave the next day or the day after. In the case of Ireland this fact is exceptionally true. I think I would be right in saying that throughout the length and breadth of Ireland there is not one per cent. of working men who are owners in fee, or who would care to be owners in fee of the houses they occupy. In Dublin, which is an old city, the artisans are unfortunately compelled to live under that worst of all systems, the tenement system, which is the

foe of all industrial thrift and the parent of the curse of drink. That system unfortunately compels these men to submit to monotonous toil from six o'clock in the morning to six in the evening, and that is bad enough; but when in addition it also compels them to spend the balance of their lifetime in the stifling atmosphere of these tenements, I myself see no room or prospect for the improvement of the men who are doomed to such slavery. But what is the remedy for this state of things? I never heard it suggested that it could be remedied by any scheme by which these men should become owners in fee of the houses they occupy. The remedy is, first of all, the extension of the system of artisans' dwellings. The Dublin Corporation have become alive to the necessity of this, and are doing well by conferring that benefit on the working men. The other remedy is a more careful attention to and a more rigorous enforcement of the laws of public health, so as to compel the landlords to provide occupiers with decent sanitary appliances. Belfast is a comparatively new city, with unlimited opportunities for extending its boundaries. Consequently the marvellous development of its commerce has enabled it to erect artisans' dwellings which are suitable and numerous enough to accommodate the hives of artisans that are swarming in that busy centre. But has it ever been suggested that the artisans of Belfast have shown the slightest anxiety to become the owners in fee of the dwellings they occupy?. Even in that remarkable staple industry of shipbuilding, which we all hope is a permanent industry, what are the views and ideas of the artisans? When the Local Government Act was passing through this House the consolidated poor rate was thrown upon the occupier and to be levied from him. Formerly that rate was paid by the landlord, and recovered by him from his tenant. But the citizens of Belfast were so much impressed with the danger of loss of rates that would arise to them by the wandering and migratory nature of the artisans that a determined effort was made by the hon. Members representing Belfast to have Belfast exempted from the provision which threw the rate on the occupier. I am aware, on the authority of those responsible for the collection of rates in Belfast, that it is anticipated, as the result of that provision in the Local Government Act, that there will be a leakage of from 25 to 30 per cent. in the amount of the poor rate, the reason being that the men only hold their houses as weekly tenants, and that they are here to-day and away to-morrow, and that it is therefore impossible to recover arrears of rates. I take these two cases as fairly typical of the condition of the working men in Ireland. I can see no prospect of any agitation on the part of the working men to become owners in fee of the houses in which they live. So much for the principle of the Bill. As to the Bill itself, in the first place it contains on its face one incurable defect which, even if the Bill were passed into law to-morrow, would at once have the effect of nullifying all its provisions. That defect is that while it contains most elaborate machinery for enabling existing lessees to extinguish all intermediate leases and acquire the fee simple, there is no provision whatever to prevent them, once they have become owners, granting new leases themselves the very next day. So that the evils, instead of being remedied, would only be intensified. You would be converting lessors into landlords who would be the owners of only one house with none of the responsibilities of landlords.

MR. FIELD: May I interrupt the hon. Gentleman? Such is not the object of the Bill at all. On the contrary, the object is to abolish the leasehold system, and make it impossible for such a thing to exist.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL: I quite understand that that is the object of the Bill; but if the hon. Member will take the trouble to read the Bill, the introduction of which he has seconded, he will find my statement is absolutely correct. From beginning to end there is not a line to prevent the new owners letting their house on lease at the highest rack rent they can get. I am not concerned with what is the object in the mind of the hon. Gentleman; I am only concerned with what is in the Bill itself. This is not a matter of drafting, but one of the principle of the measure. I repeat that a fatal defect on the face of the Bill is the fact that it contains nothing to prevent a recrudescence, in a worse form, of the very evils which it is proposed to remedy. I would like to say a word as to the draftsmanship of the Bill. Cer-

tainly in this respect it is a monster in deformity. I am, of course, perfectly aware that it is an ungracious thing, when a Bill is introduced more for discussion than anything else, to criticise very minutely the form of the measure; but this Bill is of such an extraordinary character that, although I have taken several days to study it, I am at the present moment absolutely at a loss to know exactly what it is that it proposes to accomplish.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Perhaps the hon. and learned Member is not aware that this Bill was drafted by an eminent Unionist lawyer.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL: I can only say that, in my opinion, the lawyer gave very bad value for his money. To make that plain even to the intelligence of the hon. Members opposite who are closely wedded to the principle of the Bill, let us take the preamble. I am entitled to say that the object of the preamble is to let those who read the Bill understand what it is that the Bill proposes to accomplish; but the House will be surprised to hear that while the preamble of the Bill sets out three distinct objects to be attained, the subsequent provisions of the Bill destroy each and every one of these objects. What is the first proposal as set out in the preamble? It is that—

"Whereas in nearly all the towns in Ireland the owners and occupiers of business premises and private dwellings have between them and the owners in fee several intermediate lessees who have certain terms outstanding between such owners and occupiers."

So far so good. It then proceeds—

"And whereas it is expedient that such owners and occupiers should be enabled to acquire the intermediate interests between themselves and the owner in fee, so that owners and occupiers may be encouraged to make improvements in their holdings."

Now, if that means anything, it is that the object of the Bill is to prevent the occupiers of business premises and private dwellings in the towns and cities of Ireland becoming owners. But what does the Bill itself do when you come to analyse its sections? It does not confine the right of enfranchisement to lessees or leaseholders in the towns and cities. It gives a definition of a holding which is wide enough to include a house with an acre of ground anywhere in Ireland, either in the country or in the town. But that is not bad enough. When you come to the clause which enables the application to be made, it throws over town and city and the definition of holding, and enables the lessee of any lease to apply for enfranchisement. In other words, any tenant, agricultural or pastoral, town tenant or village tenant, publican or sinner, any person in Ireland who has an existing lease, can, under the terms of this extraordinary Bill, apply to redeem all the intervening interests. But it does not stop there. Apparently, if you read the preamble, its purport and object is not to give a right to acquire the fee, or to assert a right to acquire the interest between the tenant and the owner of the fee; but when you come to Section 4, it provides that, in addition to acquiring the intervening interests, the final or occupying tenant can also acquire the fee. That contradicts the preamble.

MR. FIELD: It is only an enlargement.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL: I can understand that; but having given in Section 4 the power to acquire the fee, which is not raised in the preamble, when you come to prescribe the application, it can only be made in the case of intervening interest and excludes the fee. So that from beginning to end this measure is not only illogical and absurd, but self-contradictory in all its terms. Take another matter, which I am sure will be a revelation not merely to the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division, who seconded the motion for the Second Reading of the Bill, but also the hon. Member who introduced it. The preamble recites that the next object of the Bill is, "That the occupiers of small houses of the working classes shall be entitled to acquire the fee of the houses in which they live." Well, from beginning to end there is not a line in it which enables that purpose to be carried out. There is no machinery, no provision, no legislative suggestion by which working men could by any chance become the owner in fee of the houses they occupy.

MR. FIELD: If he holds a lease.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL: The hon. Member says that a working man can acquire his house in fee if he holds it under a lease; but can he say that there is a single artisan in Ireland that holds his house under lease? I never heard of one; and certainly they must be a very small percentage of the total artisan population of Ireland. I say that from beginning to end of the Bill this,

which is put forward in the main front as one of the objects of the Bill, is entirely lost sight of when the Bill itself comes to be considered. I have, perhaps, trespassed unduly on the time and attention of the House. I hope, however, that it will not be said or suggested that, either speaking for myself or as representing opinion on this side of the House, we deny altogether that occupiers under these leases suffer from no grievance or disadvantage. I myself am entirely in accord with the view expressed by the Committee of 1889, that is to say, that in two respects there may be grievances from which the occupiers suffer. One is the case where, on the termination of a lease, the lessees, having made substantial permanent improvements during the currency of the lease, are compelled under threat of eviction either to abandon those improvements to the landlord or else to pay such an increased rent as would amount to the confiscation of their improvements. Now I am entirely in favour of legislation that would be confined to cover that grievance. I find the ground entirely covered by the suggestion of the Committee of 1889, that in the case of all future contracts there should be power, on the determination of the lease, to award compensation for *bona fide* improvements which increased the letting value of the holding, and that in the case of existing contracts there should be such power in all cases where improvements were made with the consent of the landlord in writing.

MR. FIELD: Without interrupting the hon. and learned Gentleman, might I ask him will he support a Bill of the nature he suggests?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. FIELD: That is not an interruption. It is merely an interpellation.

MR. J. H. M. CAMPBELL: I may assure the hon. Gentleman I am not in the least disconcerted by his interruptions, which are kindly meant. It will be sufficient to consider that when the opportunity arises, but it certainly does not present itself in the Bill before the House. It is because I consider that this Bill is vicious in principle, impracticable in its application, and impossible of comprehension that I have great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of my right hon. friend for its rejection.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Smith-Barry.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devonshire, Ashburton): I had no intention of addressing the House this afternoon, but so great misrepresentation of the Report of the Committee on Town Holdings was made by the right hon. Member for Huntingdon that I think it my duty to correct what I have no doubt is an unintentional mistake. Of course, it is perfectly possible to extract from that Report evidence of land agents and lawyers in support of the present system of long leases. They make their money by long leases. But when the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to persuade the House that the Committee reported against the enfranchisement of leaseholds, he is in error. I admit that the Committee reported against the enfranchisement of leaseholds as a general scheme; but they recommended the enfranchisement of leaseholds in certain areas and under certain conditions. At page 40 of the Report it is stated that—

"The Committee recommend to Parliament the adoption of a measure for empowering local authorities to facilitate enfranchisement in the manner already described."

What is the "manner already described"? If you turn back to page 39, you will see the Committee say—

"We think the local authority might properly be empowered to acquire by agreement, or, if necessary, by compulsory purchase, the reversionary interest in the property within the area in question, and to sell the reversion of the house to such occupiers and leaseholders, either for a price paid down at once, or payable in instalments over a period of years."

It is therefore true that the Committee were in favour of applying the principle to limited areas. I should like to put before the House two views of leasehold enfranchisement. I believe there are no countries in Europe, except England and Turkey, where such a thing as a long building lease is known. It is entirely peculiar to this country. We do not shine in the artistic merits of our buildings. On the contrary, many of our English towns compare most unfavourably with Continental cities. The reason is obvious. People will not spend money except on freehold. They spent as little as possible on leasehold. The

palaces of Genoa and Northern Italy were not built on building leases. The system of building leases has never permitted the erection of fine artistic buildings. Even in London the few artistic buildings we have are built by noblemen on their own estates. This restriction on building enterprise affects the working classes, because if there are facilities for expending money, and the man who expended it has some hope of its coming into the pocket either of himself or his descendants, instead of going to some rich landlord, as is the case now, there would be more work for the working classes and for the better class of labour.

SIR E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro): I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but all the clubs in Pall Mall are built on leasehold.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I was referring to private houses, but I think, if the clubs in Pall Mall were not built on leasehold, instead of being mere copies of other buildings, they would be far finer than they are now. The enfranchisement of long leases has been spoken of as an invasion of the rights of property. The laws of this country prevent the tying up of landed property or any sort of property beyond a certain length of time, but a landlord can create a lease for any time he pleases, and there we have, of course, the evil of "the dead hand" with its grasp upon the land, and all sorts of covenants imposed upon tenants. I cordially endorse all that has been said on behalf of the Bill, and I intend to vote for it.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said he knew nothing about Ireland at first hand, but looked upon this question by the light of common sense, or, if he did not possess that qualification, then he fell back on the evidence of the Town Holdings Commission. The evidence of Irish witnesses, representing the Corporations of Dublin and Waterford and other places, went to prove that a measure of this kind was not desirable in Ireland. One of the hon. Gentlemen who spoke in the debate had expressed himself as being in favour of a multiplication of freeholds, but with that view he (Mr. Gibbs) could not agree. The Bill was one which it was very difficult to grasp the meaning of, and he had thought the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin would have thrown some light upon it, but this he had not thought proper to do. The Bill itself would not affect, apparently, a very large number of persons. It was called a Bill to improve the position of tenants in towns, but he would prefer to call it a Bill for the multiplication of unsanitary areas in towns, for, as was well known, where there were a number of small freeholds in a town they were mostly insanitary areas, whereas in the case of a large private estate it was put under proper management, and a certain amount of money was spent in improving and managing it. The tenure of land in Ireland had always been different to that in England, but there was no evidence to show that the tenure of house property differed in any way. Although the hon. Member who seconded the Bill made some observations upon terminable leaseholds, not a word appeared on that subject in the Bill, which was a small middleman's Bill. Such a Bill had been objected to by two of the greatest jurists of Ireland, and he could not see that the position of the working class would be improved. He noticed that there was a provision which excluded, under certain conditions, the occupier, and it was a monstrous thing that a house a man was living in could be taken away and given to a middleman. If the position of the working classes was to be improved by such a Bill there might be something to be said in its favour, but it did not appear that that would be the case, and therefore he should vote against it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the Attorney General for Ireland had not yet spoken on the resolution, and there was very little time to go into the details, so he would only call attention to the fact that there was not a town in Ireland which had not passed resolutions calling upon Parliament to interfere to protect the leaseholders and prevent property which they had built being practically confiscated. They asked merely for the right to continue in the premises which they had built by their own industry, and this Bill was to enable the occupier who had rebuilt up his premises to continue to occupy them without having to pay an exorbitantly increased rental. It was not an Irish question only; it affected the people of England as well. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon did not approve of the Bill, which was quite natural, because the hon. Gentleman was the owner of town pro-

perty, and therefore he opposed it just as in the old days the owners of rural properties opposed any legislation which they felt would interfere with their rights over their broad acres. This question of tenure was not an Irish question merely, it largely concerned Great Britain, where in many cases leaseholds constituted a heavy tax on industry, and if this Bill was not passed now the time would certainly come when some legislation would take place in order to remove that tax. The question the House had now to consider was the broad question of principle. If a case had been made out for legislation to protect the tenants in the towns of Ireland, then the House might vote the Second Reading and leave the details for some future time. He hoped that the Bill would be read a second time.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he was a supporter of leasehold enfranchisement and always had been. The Commission which was appointed in 1885 for the purpose of considering the great problem of housing the people dealt with the question of leasehold enfranchisement, and, whatever else might be said, their Report on that subject was conclusive. The majority of the Commissioners were not men who were in the habit of advocating the plunder of landlords, or any other class of the community. They were told by the hon. Member for St. Albans that this Bill proposed to plunder the landlords, that it proposed confiscation, and that it was breaking contracts. Why, the Tory Government had done nothing in the last five years but break contracts. It had been the basis of their legislation. If so great a party as the Conservative party legislated in that direction, how could they find fault with such a person as himself if he attempted to follow so great an authority? He was quite willing to follow those great statesmen on matters of this kind. On these grounds he was glad to have the opportunity of voting for the Second Reading of the Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I do not propose either to follow the hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of this Bill or the hon. Member who seconded it, into the many topics with which they dealt. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the motion not only "surveyed mankind from China to Peru," but dealt with physiology, Biblical history, the Civil Code, and sociology, and gave us his views on the different military systems of Europe. He referred to many authorities, all of whom he desired to press into service, from the patriarch Abraham, through Justinian and Mr. Gladstone, down to a gentleman who published a pamphlet the other day on leasehold enfranchisement. It is not my intention to follow him in his rambles over these interesting fields. When you come to contrast those opinions with the Bill before the House, he seems to be in the position of a man who is riding a runaway horse, because the Bill has taken him in every direction in which he does not intend to go, and in no direction in which he did intend to go. The Bill would defeat the objects the hon. Member seems to have in view, and it would effect other objects which he does not desire. Nor shall I follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon with respect to his representation of what was decided by the Committee on which he himself sat. Of course, it would be absurd to deny that in every portion of this kingdom interest is taken in the question of leasehold enfranchisement. I do not think that hon. Members have really understood what this Bill does, for it goes far behind any system of leasehold enfranchisement ever suggested, or any system of compulsory purchase ever suggested by any responsible person, or ever recommended by any Committee that ever sat. I can perfectly well understand that there should be controversy and difference of opinion as to which of the prevailing systems is best in regard to building leases. There is, first, the principle that obtains in many parts: when a man desires to build a house in a town he acquires ground to build upon, and becomes the freehold tenant. There is the other system that prevails in Scotland, where a man gets a perpetual rent. The systems differ in different localities. Some localities are in favour of one system and some of another. Some of the most successful towns, such as Birmingham, have been reared into their present position by adopting the leasehold system, while others have adopted the system of freehold tenure or perpetual rents. What the Committee report is that there is no superiority of one system over another. It is very much a question of the custom the people are used to. It cannot be fairly said that the freehold system rather than the leasehold system

permits public improvements or secures for the inhabitants of towns better dwellings. But, however that may be, that is not really the object of this Bill at all. The real object of this Bill is to enable every occupier who carries on any business in any premises, even if he only be a tenant from year to year, if he only got in yesterday and only sells beef, or beer, or tobacco for a week, to come immediately, without the sanction of any authority, without the approval of Parliament, and without any investigation whatever, against the will of any person above him, and compulsorily buy up the property. There never was such a system ever suggested. I do not know what inherent virtue there is in a man who gets into business that he should have the power conferred upon him to compulsorily acquire the premises he occupies. It is better than the powers enjoyed in connection with the public service, sanitary reform, or the great schemes for public improvement. All persons, corporations, and companies actuated by such desires have to go to Parliament to ask permission to put in force compulsory purchase. Not so the occupier in my hon. friend's Bill. The moment he gets into occupation and spends five shillings in repairs, he, without anybody's authority, can immediately acquire the property of everybody above him. The hon. Member recommended the Bill to a certain extent on the ground that it would give a boon to the working classes. I wish to strip it of that pretence; it is a false pretence. The suggestion that it is really of any benefit to the working classes is quite absurd. Working men as a rule do not carry on business in their premises at all. They do not take leases of their dwellings, they do not purchase their dwellings, they do not effect improvements on their dwellings, and they are outside this Bill altogether. As a rule the ordinary artisans in great towns are merely temporary tenants. They are here to-day and gone to-morrow, following, wisely in many instances, the labour market. I quite admit that sometimes they are permanent, but in many cases they are not. A Bill which was passed in 1896 is of use of them. It provides that where they desire to acquire an interest in their holdings they can get the local authority to lend them money to do so up to the sum of £400. There is no provision of that character in this Bill. All mere occupiers who do not carry on any business and do not make improvements or acquire any interest in the premises are excluded from this Bill. If this Bill were passed into law any tenant who carried on business even for a week could get a compulsory purchase of the premises, though he might only be a yearly tenant. I cannot conceive of any man who did not wish to be deprived of his property altogether letting his property to anyone. There never was any Act passed, so far as I have heard or read, that conferred compulsory powers of such a character on any individual class of the people, with a result which would really benefit no one except possibly here and there an individual who wished to acquire the property in which he carried on his business. What is there to justify such an invasion of the rights of property? If you take away all the advantage a man seeks or hopes to secure in buying, improving, or building property, I do not know what class of the community you benefit. You would have no great improvement schemes. Nobody would be interested in making them if the return you look forward to is so precarious, and, with legislation of this character, might be filched from you any day. That is not the way to promote improvements on the outlay of capital for securing better dwellings for any class of the community. I have listened with great attention to the mover and seconder of the Bill, and I have endeavoured to discover what is the justification for the measure. What justification is there for taking arbitrarily, against a man's will, property which he owns, and which he has let under a particular contract to a particular individual? I confess that no justification, in my mind, has been put forward at all. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill said that leasehold enfranchisement was the cause of the decay of the Irish towns. Why, there never was a more preposterous reason ever put forward. The decay of the Irish towns is simply due to these two facts: First of all, that there is no manufacturing in Ireland; and, secondly, that the small towns have been connected by railways with the great centres. The small towns were never anything but places of distribution; they were never centres of manufactures. The hon. Member gave us no reason why a system of compulsory expropriation should be established which exists in no other case and in no other

nation. He said it would be inconvenient for traders occasionally not to be able to acquire a freehold interest in the premises in which they carry-on their trade. It must be remembered that some of the most successful towns in this country have grown to what they are under the leasehold system. Birmingham is entirely under the leasehold system. Outside the boundary of Dublin a town has grown up under these conditions, and, as has been well pointed out by my hon. and learned friend the Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division, so far from the acquisition of the landlords' interest being facilitated by private individuals, at different points it would retard it. There is, I submit to the House, nothing more likely to retard any general scheme of improvement than to allow opposing interests to grow up here and there. However one might feel disposed to look with favour on any well-considered legislation which would secure tenants' compensation for improvements they might have effected in towns, on the part of the Government I must give my strenuous opposition to the adoption of any system of general confiscation whereby a man who comes into occupation but yesterday can come in and acquire compulsorily the interest in a particular holding of all above him. So far as to the principle, and so far as to the absence of any justification of its adoption; but what shall we say of the machinery? It is said that in the event of the parties being unable to agree, it is to be referred to the Land Commissioners, not to decide whether compulsory powers shall be put into force or not, as Parliament decides what shall be done in the case of bodies both in England and Ireland seeking compulsory powers. No, no; the person to give the compulsory powers is the occupier himself. The function of the Land Commissioners is merely to decide on the amount of compensation to be given. One of the peculiarities of the Bill is this, that while there may be questions between the parties both as to the title and as to the amount of compensation, the question that is to referred to the Land Commissioners is the amount of compensation, and questions of title are reserved to the jury. The hon. Gentleman who claims to be the father of this Bill is a legislative discoverer in that respect. It is the first occasion on which I ever saw it suggested that the legal tribunal should determine on the amount of money to be paid, while the complicated question of title is to be determined by jurors. The Land Commission, I believe, has many virtues, but at all events it was created for a purpose—to decide disputes between landlord and tenant of agricultural land. It is to be presumed that the Commissioners are qualified for that purpose, and that they have chosen a staff qualified for the duties thrown upon them, but I believe it is said that it does not give satisfaction to either side. Then, at the present moment, it is unable to overtake its work. It is largely in arrear. Hardly a day passes that the hon. Member for East Kerry, I think, does not put to me a series of questions as to the amount of arrears of work in different portions of Ireland, and when there is some faint prospect that the anxious tenants will have their rents fixed. I do not think, if Ireland were ransacked, enough Commissioners could be secured qualified to decide between landlord and tenant in the rural districts, and qualified as well to deal with all those reversionary interests of houses occupied in any part. At all events, they have no staff. The men have not been appointed for that purpose, and they would deal quite as unsatisfactorily with the questions submitted to them as the jury the hon. Gentleman has in contemplation would deal with the questions of title that may arise in connection with any of the properties to be acquired. The definition in the Bill of a holding is wide enough to embrace almost everything, while the definition of a lessee includes an ordinary tenant from year to year. I do not think it has been contemplated that large tracts of land in Ireland and considerable portions in the towns are owned by corporations, churches, and charities of different descriptions. The definition of "holding" is so wide that, under the Bill, the Corporation of Dublin would, if the lessees or occupiers so desired it, be found landless in a week. The hon. Member for Waterford would find the most useful hospital that exists there deprived of its principal means of carrying on the functions it discharges. These are not landowners in the ordinary acceptation of the term. As the property of these different corporations could be acquired on the payment of a certain amount of money, the sum obtained would not be productive of anything like the

income derived at present. I have only one word to say in conclusion in regard to this. The object can best be seen with reference to value. The provision with reference to value was correctly described as confiscation of the landlord's property. The clause upon that matter provides nothing at all for consequential injury that might be done to the remaining portion of the property in the hands of the landlord. Anyone acquainted with the conditions under which compensation for consequential injury is given for lands taken by railways and other great public bodies knows that the amount of compensation given to the owners with respect to the property remaining in their hands exceeds in amount the compensation given for the property actually taken. Common justice requires that it should be so. It may be that there are two or three houses together, and a house on one side is taken. There may be vast injury done to those not taken, exceeding in amount the value of the premises actually taken. There is no provision for any such compensation in this Bill. On the contrary, compensation is limited to the value of the thing actually taken, and it leaves out of account altogether the injury that may be done to the property remaining in the landlord's possession. On the general principle that this is an endeavour to put the principle of compulsory purchase to an unjust and inequitable use, that no considerations have been brought forward to justify a Bill of this character, that if carried it would not do anything in the way of solving the great problems in connection with the housing of the working classes, but would act in a contrary direction, that it would defeat the objects the hon. Gentleman has in view, and that it goes beyond any project ever put forward for the enfranchisement of leaseholders, I oppose the Second Reading of the Bill.

*SERJEANT HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I observe that the Government, of which my right hon. and learned friend is a distinguished ornament, is always very ready to hold out promises to every class of the community, but when any attempt is made to realise the hopes so held out some excuse or other is found for starting objections. It has become the fashion lately in dealing with Private Members' Bills to disregard very much the principle which underlies a Bill, and to criticise very minutely and very astutely the phraseology of the different sections. That is the course pursued on the present occasion. I understand that this is a Bill for leasehold enfranchisement in towns. If there is any question in which the public, not merely in Ireland but in England, are interested it is the question of leasehold enfranchisement. I understand how hon. and right hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House have a holy horror of the very name of leasehold enfranchisement, because it is a class of measure that strikes more or less at the root of property and the monopoly which has been for so many centuries held in land and houses by the propertied classes. But the time has come for emancipating the public generally from that monopoly. That is the principle underlying this Bill, and it is the issue which, whenever the time arrives, will be put before the country, not only as affecting Ireland, but as affecting England and Scotland. What I particularly deprecate on the part of the right hon. Gentleman is that he does not manfully grapple with this principle, and, as representing that side of the House, say that they will not consent to have anything in the shape of a leasehold enfranchisement measure. What are the evils this Bill is really intended to meet? In Dublin, Cork, Queenstown, and Tipperary, and other towns throughout Ireland, there are leases originally perhaps for 99 years or perhaps 999 years. These leases are let and sub-let, and in many cases there are three or four intermediate tenants between the head landlord and the occupying tenant. The consequence is that there is no one really interested in improving the property, and if the occupying tenant towards the close of the lease is foolish enough, for the sake of his business or otherwise, to enhance the value of the property when the lease expires he loses the entire benefit of it. It is against that mischief that this Bill is levelled, and accordingly we find in the twenty-fifth section "that no one shall take advantage of the provisions of this Bill unless the unexpired term shall in all not exceed the period of fifteen years." It will only apply towards the expiration of those long leases. I was pleased to hear from my right hon. and learned friend one observation which leads me to hope that perhaps if this Bill is not carried—I do trust, nevertheless, that it will go to a division in order that we may

know who are in favour of leasehold enfranchisement and who are not—he would not object to a Bill if it merely entitled tenants in towns to compensation for improvements. Perhaps I took a more liberal view of the remark than he intended. There is no reason in justice why the provisions of Mr. Gladstone's land code, which is confined to agricultural holdings, should not also apply to town holdings.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 100 ; Noes, 188. (Division List No. 96.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Baker, Sir John
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Blake, Edward
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Dewar, Arthur
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (South'ton)
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William (Dublin)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir E. Temperley
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hedderwick, Thos. Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'nsC.
M'Crae, George
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
Maddison, Fred.
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks.)
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Palmer, George W. (Reading)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterf'd)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir Robert Threshie
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Webberburn, Sir William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Chamberlain Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J (Manc'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (City of Lond.
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliatt, John Saunders
Godson, Sir A. Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron

Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert W.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Helder, Augustus
Hill, Rt Hn A. Staveley (Staffs
Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hamps'd
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Leighton, tanley
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Eves'm
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
Ma donna, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mappin, Sir Fre lerick Thorpe
Marks, Henry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E.
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants)
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morrison, Walter
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Rich. (Lancs New'n
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Robinson, Brooke
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.
Smith, James Parker (Lanark.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Sir Henry M. Lambeth
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. (She'ld
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A C E (Taunton
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. S.-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Fisher.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

As amended, considered: read the third time, and passed.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Third Report brought up, and read: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LEE CONSERVANCY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

ST. DAVID'S RAILWAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL.

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports *to lie upon the* Table, and to be printed.

MAIDENHEAD GAS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the Motion for Adjournment,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said: I think the House will expect that I should give notice in the interest of our holidays that it will be desirable to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule to-morrow from the second Order of the Day. The first Order is the Railway Accidents Bill, and the second the appointment of the Municipal Trading Committee. I have no reason to believe that the Railway Accidents Bill will last any length of time, but it may. At the same time I have no command over the proceedings, and if we were not successful in getting to the second Order of the Day it would have to be taken on Tuesday, which would be most inconvenient to everybody. On Friday the motion for the adjournment for the holidays will be the first Order The Third Reading of the Finance Bill will be taken as the second Order on Friday.

Adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 5th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Ossett Corporation Gas.
Wetherby District Water.
Wakefield Corporation Market.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON AND SAN FRANCISCO BANK.

Petition of the London and San Francisco Bank, Limited, under the common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to reduce the capital and extend the powers of the London and San Francisco Bank, Limited, and for other purposes; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

RUGELEY GAS BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

GLYNCORRWG URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL GAS BILL [H.L.].

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

SUNDERLAND CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill: Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

GRANTHAM GAS BILL.

REDHILL GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

HAMILTON BURGH BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE WATER BILL [H.L.].

NEWPORT CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bills passed, and sent to the Commons.

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [H.L.].

CORK, BANDON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

COLONIAL BANK BILL.

Read 3ª, and passed.

BRIGHTON CORPORATION BILL.

MARKET WEIGHTON DRAINAGE AND NAVIGATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

MORLEY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

PRESTON CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

GREAT GRIMSBY STREET TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

ROTHERHAM CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

SHEFFIELD CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

RAWMARSH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, namely:—

E. Jersey (chairman),
E. Yarborough,
L. Lawrence,
L. Northbourne,
L. Ludlow;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday the 2nd of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Forty-second Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended 31st December 1899.

AUSTRALIA.

Papers relating to the Federation of the Australian Colonies.

JAMAICA.

Further Correspondence relating to the Finances and Government of the Island of Jamaica (in continuation of [c. 9412] and [c. 9413] July 1899).

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2394. United States (Charlestown and District).

No. 2395. Chile (Coquimbo).

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Part I. Criminal Statistics: Statistics relating to criminal proceedings, police, coroners, prisons, reformatory and industrial schools, and criminal lunatics, for the year 1898.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Abstract of Accounts for the University of St. Andrews for the year ended 30th September, 1899, being the annual report on the state of the finances of the University under the provisions of the Act.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1889.

Minutes of Committee of Council on Education, sanctioning the subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act for—

1. County of Buckingham (8th minute).
2. District of Beckenham.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND) (RULES).

Order in Council, dated 30th March, 1900, giving effect to a rule of court.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

EDUCATION (REVISED CODE, 1900).

Petition for amendment of, of the London School Board; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

BRITISH MUSEUM BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to authorise the trustees of the British Museum to deposit copies of local newspapers with local authorities, and to dispose of valueless printed matter—Was presented by the Viscount Peel; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on the second day after the Easter Recess. (No. 48.)

ANCIENT MONUMENTS PROTECTION BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 49.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Seeing the noble Marquess the Prime Minister in his place, I should like to ask him if he can tell us when, and for how long, the House will adjourn for the Easter Recess.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I am informed that the business of the House of Commons will not allow of our adjourning till Monday. We then propose to adjourn for three weeks.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five of the clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 5th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, namely—

Metropolitan District Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, namely—

City of London Electric Lighting Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely—

Church's Patent Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

GREAT YARMOUTH PORT AND HAVEN BILL.

Queen's Consent signified; read the third time, and passed.

READING CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL.

SOUTHPORT WATER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That in the case of the Central London Railway Bill Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Bill accordingly read a second time and committed.

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL.

"To empower the Urban District Council of Portland to supply gas, and to provide for the transfer of the undertaking of the Portland Gas Light and Coke and Coal Company, Limited, to the Council, and to make further provision in regard to the finance of the said district; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL AND CLONTARF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Resolution of the House of the 19th day of March, relative to the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill, which was ordered to be communicated to the Lords, and the Message from the Lords of the 23rd day of March signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution, read.

Ordered, That the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill be committed to a Select Committee of four Members nominated by the Committee of Selection to be joined with a Committee of four Lords.

Ordered, That all Petitions in favour of or against the Bills, presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard in favour of or against the Bills, and Counsel heard in support of the Bills.

Ordered, That a message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that the Dublin Corporation Bill and the Clontarf Urban District Council Bill have been committed to four Members of this House, to be joined with a Committee of four Lords, pursuant to the Resolution of the House of the 19th day of March, and to the Message from the Lords of the 23rd day of March signifying their concurrence thereto.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) AMALGAMATION (BY ORDER).

Lords' Message [30th March], "That it is desirable that the Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [Lords], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [Lords], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament," considered.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith): The motion which stands in my name is only the corollary of the one passed by the House about a fortnight ago, when it accepted the proposal to refer these Bills to a Joint Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said Resolution."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*).

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I rise to oppose this motion, and in doing so I wish to explain that I do not do so in any spirit of enmity to the companies promoting the Bills. But it will be remembered that a similar Bill was rejected last year, although for anything I know to the contrary the proposals may be for the good of the districts served by the railways concerned; my objection does not touch the question at all. There is a very strong movement on foot in Ireland to obtain from the Lord Lieutenant a Viceregal Commission to inquire into the working of the railways and canals in Ireland, in furtherance of which a deputation representing Members on both sides of the House, as well as a number of municipal and other corporations, waited upon the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland to express the unanimous opinion that it was desirable such an inquiry should be made. I do not speak so much from personal experience, but there can be no doubt that great dissatisfaction exists with the working of the railways and canals as regards rates and fares and the treatment of perishable goods. It seems to me that if this large scheme in the Bills—dealing with the whole railway system of the South of Ireland—is disposed of, it might be used as an argument against the views of those who are anxious for the Viceregal Commission which there is at present every reason to expect will be appointed. Therefore I hope the Government will not press the matter. As the Bills have been put off before, I think they may be postponed for another year without any great inconvenience. In the meantime we may get a thorough inquiry into the whole railway question, which will enable a Bill to be framed, perhaps, which would be beneficial to all parties.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I also rise to oppose the motion, in the hope of inducing the Chairman of Ways and Means to allow the matter to stand over for a length of time. It is not often I find myself in cordial agreement with the hon. Member opposite, but I do hold with him that if this motion were deferred it would be better for all parties concerned. Many public bodies in Ireland have appealed to the Lord Lieutenant to appoint a Commission to inquire into the railway system of Ireland, and, in my opinion, to rush this matter through now would be to prejudge the case before his Excellency has decided whether he will appoint a Commission or not. There are reasons no doubt which prevent his Excellency attending to the matter at once, but I am sure when he knows the feeling behind this request for an inquiry he will grant one. These Bills have been twice rejected by Parliament, and it is for the House of Commons to say whether its judgment is to be questioned in this way—whether its opinion is to be put on one side and got round, so to speak, as now proposed. If the House of Commons, having twice spent much time on these Bills, has pronounced against them, certainly the Chairman of Ways and Means ought not to be in any hurry to rush them through before any inquiry has been held. One of the principal duties of the Board of Agriculture for Ireland was to inquire into the best way of increasing the produce of the country, and of facilitating its carriage to the best markets. The Board, through its Vice-President the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, is therefore a party to the proposal for a Viceregal Commission. It is entitled to have the advantage of such an inquiry as is proposed before com-

mencing its new duties in earnest under the new Act. The railway companies can very well afford to wait another year. One excuse put forward last year for urgency by the Waterford and Limerick Company was that they were in a tight corner, as their system was not paying very well. They came like Lazarus to the door begging to be relieved, but we know now their line is paying pretty well, and that if it were properly managed it would do still better. As for the Great Southern and Western Railway, their only need for hurry is that they are getting a good bargain. I maintain that from past experience of railways it is dangerous to hand over more than one-half of Ireland to one company. We know that despite opposition certain railways were recently allowed to amalgamate in the South of England, and as a result the public have greater cause of complaint against them than ever. I know it has been asserted that certain guarantees will be given as to rates, but it has been proved to have been all humbug. The whole Irish railway system is a perfect disgrace, and I am free to say that one of the chief causes of Ireland's misfortunes is her treatment by the railway companies. These companies seem to look upon the public merely as goods and chattels out of which a dividend is to be made, and they apparently do not care what becomes of the industries of the people. I appeal to the Chairman of Ways and Means to allow this matter to stand over until we have heard from his Excellency whether or not he will appoint the Commission that has been asked for.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I desire to join in the appeal for an adjournment on the grounds which have already been stated. In view of the fact that so large an area is concerned in this amalgamation, and remembering the remarkably strong representations which have been made to the Lord Lieutenant in favour of an inquiry into the general administration of the Irish railways, I think the demand for an adjournment till after Easter is a reasonable one.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Perhaps I had better explain briefly the circumstances under which these Bills have arrived at this stage. At the beginning of the session the hon. Member for Waterford informed me that he was very anxious that they should originate in this House, but after consultation the Lords Chairman and myself came to the conclusion that, the Bills having originated in this House last session, it was only fair to the promoters that they should take their chance in the other House. But I went this far; I said that although I was unable to agree that the promoters of these Bills should originate them in this House, I would suggest that the Bills should be sent to a Joint Committee, so as to save expense to both promoters and opposers, and to prevent a recurrence of circumstances which I think were universally regretted, which took place at the end of last session, circumstances which led to the very rapid conclusion of the Committee which sat after a very prolonged inquiry, with a result which gave very little satisfaction to the Members of the House generally.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): It gave immense satisfaction.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: That certainly was not the view which was put forward in the House at the time, though it might have given immense satisfaction to the hon. Member and some of his friends. Therefore, in order to meet the views of the hon. Member for Waterford, Lord Morley and myself came to an agreement that the matter should be referred to a Joint Committee. I would like to point out to the Member for East Belfast that even if he is successful in opposing this motion he will not stop the progress of the Bills, because they are in the other House. They will go forward in the other House directly after Easter in the ordinary way. There will be no doubt a prolonged inquiry in the other House, and if passed there they will come down to this House and there will be another prolonged inquiry. Therefore the views of the hon. Member will not be met by rejecting the proposal which I now make.

MR. WOLFF: Surely before that is all done we shall know whether or not there will be a Viceregal Commission.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I will deal with that presently. Obviously the arrangement which was entered into would be broken, and the Bill would have to proceed in the other House in the

ordinary way, and the expenses which I was anxious to save the Irish parties, either promoting or opposing, would be duplicated, and the whole beneficial effects I was anxious to introduce with regard to these Bills would be absolutely thrown away. Then it is suggested that the matter should be postponed until the Viceregal Commission has been appointed. Can the hon. Member say it is to be appointed?

MR. WOLFF: We think so.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The information which I have received is, I will not say in a contrary direction, but it is that it is extremely doubtful whether any such Commission will be appointed at all. I am told that no decision has been arrived at. My hon. friend admits that.

MR. WOLFF: There has not been time.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: My hon. friend wishes not only to reject this motion, but also to postpone the consideration of these matters until the Government have come to a decision with regard to the Commission. Then the Commission will have to sit. As the hon. Member himself has said, this is a matter of very considerable and far-reaching importance, and it can hardly be expected that in a month or two months a decision will be arrived at. Therefore, the result of the hon. Member's action would be to stop the progress of the Bill altogether for this session. I do not think that would be fair to the promoters of the Bill. This is the second session in which the promoters have brought these Bills forward, and, in my view, they are entitled to receive the judgment of Parliament upon them. I will go further. I understand my hon. friend says that a Viceregal Commission is required for the purpose of considering generally the question of rates and fares and delays. There is nothing, if the Bills are to go through, which would prevent such a Commission inquiring into these matters, but they would have to be settled by a public Act.

MR. WOLFF: Yes, I said so.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The House would have to pronounce its decision through a public Act.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: It has full power to deal with monopolies such as these.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: That is not the question for the Viceregal Commission.

MR. MOLLOY: It is one of the points it would be asked to consider, and we fear the passing of these Bills would take that matter out of their purview.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: You do not know that a Viceregal Commission will be appointed.

MR. MOLLOY: We have asked for one.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am afraid that hon. Members from Ireland ask for a good many things which they do not always get, and it seems to me an extraordinary thing to say that the promoters of these Bills are not to have a hearing in Parliament because at some future time unknown some Viceregal Commission may possibly be appointed to inquire into some of the matters which are contained in these Bills. I hope the House will not fall in with the view of the hon. Member for East Belfast. I would not say that it would be a breach of faith to do so, but, certainly, as far as I am concerned, it would operate very materially against my ever attempting in the future to enter into an arrangement, as I did on this occasion, the object of which is to save expense to the Irish litigants who are concerned, and to meet the views which were represented to me by the hon. Member for Waterford. Under these circumstances, I hope that the House will agree to this proposal, more especially as by rejecting the proposal which I have made it will not prevent the further progress of this Bill in another place.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I think the right hon. Gentleman's remarks are unfair to the Lord Lieutenant. He says we do not know if a Viceregal Commission will be appointed, but seeing that opinion in Ireland in all directions is in favour of the appointment of the Commission, I do not believe the Lord Lieutenant will be so indifferent to that opinion as to refuse it. A great deal of money was spent on the investigation of

these Bills last year, a certain decision has been come to, and, so far as I am concerned, I do not see that there has been any change in the circumstances since then which ought to lead to another result. Not only did the Committee last year throw out the Bills, but the Committee which sat in the previous year with reference to the Rosslare and Fishguard line went out of its way to declare that the monopoly would be injurious to the south of Ireland, and insisted that the majority of the directors of that line, if the Bill passed, should be directors of the Great Western of England. It is notorious that every Irish Member upon the Committee last year voted against it. If a monopoly is created there will be no power, as experience has proved, to break it, and I therefore say that everything is to be gained and nothing lost by delay in this matter.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I would not have intervened in the discussion had it not been for the rather remarkable statement of the Chairman of Committees. The right hon. Gentleman has practically told us that we are not to have a Viceregal Commission appointed. Only the other day, however, when the most influential deputation that ever waited upon a Minister from Ireland, —a deputation representing not only Members on both sides of this House, but also the principal municipal bodies and almost every interest in Ireland—waited upon the Vice-President of the Irish Agricultural Board, the Vice-President gave us the greatest possible hope and encouragement that a Viceregal Commission would be appointed to inquire into the whole of the railway system in Ireland. We now suddenly hear from the Chairman of Committees a declaration that practically amounts to an announcement that we are not to have a Commission.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I said I had no reason to suppose that it would be granted.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman, I am sure, will recollect that he went much further than that. He said he had information to the contrary.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I have not been in communication with the Irish Government at all on the matter. I have no information one way or the other, but I have no reason to suppose the Commission will be granted.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman's correction alters to a very considerable extent what he appeared to say a few moments ago. I really must be very much mistaken, however, if he did not say what I have attributed to him.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I have had no communication about it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman probably does not recollect. Certainly we understood him to use the words that he "had received information to the contrary," and in view of that I think that we are entitled to ask if it is a respectful way to treat that deputation, representing all parties and all interests, to give them this information in this roundabout way. With regard to the question of appointing a Joint Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons to examine these Bills, I can only say that speaking generally, the appointment of Joint Committees, particularly on Irish questions, is not a good custom. I regard it as an attempt which will not succeed to popularise the House of Lords. The House of Lords ought to examine questions for themselves, and the House of Commons in like manner for themselves. I think that some guarantee ought to be given by the Government as to the composition of the Joint Committee. Nearly all the members of the House of Lords are supporters of the Government. If five members are appointed by the House of Commons, at least three will be supporters of the Government, and the chances are a hundred to one that the whole of the members appointed by the House of Lords will be supporters or members of the Government, so that of ten Members eight will be supporters of the Government, and only two Members of the House of Commons will take anything like an independent view. I do not say whether the arrangement in this particular case is a good or a bad one, but I do submit that the new system which has cropped up of appointing Joint Committees is one which ought to be very seriously considered by the House of Commons. It appears to be

quite certain that if this proposal is agreed to it will practically put a stop to the examination of the whole system of railways in Ireland. The deputation to the Vice President of the Agricultural Board did not ask for an inquiry into this scheme of amalgamation alone; they asked for one into the whole system of railway rates and workings in Ireland. I think we ought to have an assurance from the Irish Attorney General that if this proposal is carried it will not be used as an argument against the perfectly legitimate demand of the Irish Members and the corporations and county councils for the appointment of a Commission, Viceregal or Royal, to inquire into the whole system of railway rates.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): I intend to take no part either in support of or opposition to this motion. I only rise to say that when this amalgamation scheme was before the House last session the Irish Government took no part in it either on one side or the other. They neither supported it nor opposed it, and it is my intention to adopt exactly the same attitude on the present occasion. I wish, however, to clear up the doubts that appear to exist as to my right hon. friend's remarks concerning the possible fate of the application for a Viceregal Commission. The application was made only a very short time ago, certainly by a most representative deputation, but one which, after all, included some nine or ten of the most vehement opponents of these Bills.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: And also some of its supporters.

MR. ATKINSON: The application is now under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant, and no one has a right to assume either that it will be granted or that it will not be. But I can assure hon. Members that the passing of the Bills will no more prejudice the appointment of the Commission than the appointment of the Commission will prejudice the passage of the Bills. I was rather astonished at the disapproval which the hon. Member for East Clare expressed of the appointment of the Joint Committees, in view of the fact that only half an hour or so ago he allowed one to pass with reference to the Boundaries Bill without a murmur of disapprobation.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to correct him. I offered no opinion as to whether the application of the principle of a Joint Committee to the Bill was good or bad. I simply asked for some guarantee as to the composition of the Committee, for my objection to it was based on the ground that such a Committee will in the ordinary course be swamped by Government supporters.

MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Member certainly spoke about popularising the House of Lords, and I was pointing out that that was an argument he failed to advance in connection with the preceding Bill.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Well, really, I do not think it will succeed in popularising that House.

MR. MOLLOY: May I inform the right hon. Gentleman that in addition to the deputation which has been referred to, another one even more widely representative has been organised in Ireland, and is awaiting an appointment with the Lord Lieutenant to receive it. The right hon. Gentleman referred to me as a vehement opponent of these Bills. I am not. I only fear that their passing will interfere with our chances of securing railway reform. The right hon. Gentleman is entirely in error when he says there were ten opponents to these Bills on the deputation. I ought to know, for I organised it myself. The members of the deputation were not opponents of amalgamation. The impression that they were was circulated by interested railway companies for the purpose of prejudicing the House in favour of the Bills. All we want is to obtain better facilities on the Irish lines, and that object can, we think, be best attained by asking for a Commission to inquire into the whole of the existing system. I regret to see that the Government are ranging themselves on the side of the promoting companies, in opposition to the most strenuously expressed views of both Nationalists and Unionists, county councils, and nearly all the Irish public bodies.

MR. ATKINSON: I distinctly said I took no part whatever either on one side or the other.

MR. MOLLOY: But I understand the Government Whips are to tell in favour of the motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means, and therefore it is clear the Government are taking the side of the promoting companies against the unanimous views of the Irish Members, as well as against the opinions of all the great Irish corporations, and of the twenty-six county councils and thirty-six urban and district councils, and of all the representatives of agricultural and trading associations in Ireland. I cannot congratulate the Government on the anti-Irish position they have taken up.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Although I was a member of the deputation which waited upon the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland, I should like to explain that I intend to support the motion for a Joint Committee on the ground that it will effect a great saving of public money. It has been often complained that the promotion of Private Bills costs an excessive sum of money, and we ought, therefore, not to reject this chance of reducing expense. I must express my surprise that the hon. Member for East Clare passed over in silence the motion for the appointment of a Joint Committee on the Dublin and Clontarf Boundary Bills, and then poured the vials of his wrath upon the present proposal. I still hope the Attorney General will use his influence to secure the appointment of the Viceregal Commission which has been asked for.

*MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): The difficulty I feel in agreeing with some of my hon. friends is this: The Bill is about to be committed. It will be proceeded with no matter what the vote on this motion may be. The question, therefore, is not whether the Bill should be stopped; for we cannot stop it; but what is the best mode of proceeding with the Bill. My opinion is that the method which has been adopted with regard to the Dublin Boundaries Bill is the best, and for my part I see no substantial ground for opposing the motion. I am glad to hear that the consideration of the Bill at this juncture will not prejudice the proposal for a Commission on Irish Railway Administration.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): Last year when the Great Southern and Western Railway Amalgamation Bill was before this House I supported it. But as regards the present motion I desire to enter my protest against this method of sending Irish Bills to Joint Committees. I made this protest the other day, when the exceptional course was taken with the view to forcing the Corporation Bill through the Houses of Parliament. I did so because no argument has been adduced or can be adduced for making these exceptional arrangements in regard to Irish Bills. We are told that the object is to save expense, but that is an argument which should apply equally to Bills from all parts of the United Kingdom, and not merely to Irish Bills. I look upon this attempt to introduce a novel procedure solely in regard to Ireland as little less than a scandal. It is done in order to force these Bills through, and although I am in favour of a certain amount of amalgamation I shall vote against this motion if a division is taken.

MR. WOLFF: After the explanation of the Chairman of Committees, and in view of the pledge of the Attorney General for Ireland, that the appointment of this Joint Committee will not prejudice our claim for a Viceregal Commission, I have no wish to divide the House, and I will not press my objection.

Question put and agreed to.

Ordered, That a message be sent to the Lords to acquaint them with this Resolution.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

Reported with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Kingston-upon-Thames; and for other purposes." Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide an additional supply of water to the burgh of Falkirk and districts and places adjacent, and for the construction and maintenance of new and additional works; to extend the limits of compul-

sory supply; to confer further powers on the Falkirk and Larbert Water Trustees; and for other purposes." Falkirk and District Water Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868; to confer further powers on the Guardians of the Birmingham Proof House; and for other purposes." Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [Lords].

And, also a Bill intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to Alexander Imschenetzky for an invention for manufacture of fireproof and insulating compounds known as Uralite." Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [Lords].

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

FALKIRK AND DISTRICT WATER BILL [Lords].

GUN BARREL PROOF ACT, 1868, AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

IMSCHENETZKY'S URALITE PATENT BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

DEVONPORT CORPORATION BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (NEW CODE).

Petitions for alteration, from Barrow-in-Furness, and Brighton and Preston; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Lymington and Hanley; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from West Kirby and Mansfield Woodhouse; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Newcastle; Dewsbury; Melbourne; Spennymoor; Binchester; Gunnislake; South Gasforth; Tudhoe (two); Ferry Hill; Swansea; Ryhope; and Wishaw; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Melbourne; Swansea; Middlesbrough; and Brotton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AUSTRALIA.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the Federation of the Australian Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

JAMAICA.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to the Finances and Government of the Island of Jamaica (in continuation of [C. 9412] and [C. 9413] July, 1899) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSIONS (EXPLOSION AT NEW HARBOUR WORKS, DOVER).

Copy presented, of Report by Captain M. B. Lloyd, R.A., Her Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of gunpowder on the works of the new Admiralty Harbour at East Cliff, near Dover, on the 14th January, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University for the year ended 30th September, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2394 and 2395 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEES (WOMEN MEMBERS).

Return ordered, "of the number of Women on the respective Technical Instruction Committees of County and County Borough Councils, and on Committees under Clause VII. of the Directory of the late Department of Science and Art."—(*Mr. Jebb.*)

TRADE UNION FUNDS.

Return ordered, "of the trade union societies or branches which have been permitted by the National Debt Commissioners to deposit in savings banks without restriction as to amount."—(*Mr. Woods.*)

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return ordered, "of the amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other public offices on the 31st day of March, 1900, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 147, of session 1899 :—

£2¾ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	Local Loans £3 per Cent. Stock.	Guaranteed Land Stock.	Book Debt, 55 and 56 Vic. c. 26.	Other Securities.		
						Treasury Bills.	Annuities for terms of years.	Local Loans Bonds.

—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TREATMENT OF BOER PRISONERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War how many prisoners of war have been confined on board ship at the Cape; what number have died; what number have been ill; and what number are at present confined on board ship.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): 3,899 prisoners have been confined on board ship, of whom nine have died. There have also been thirteen deaths among the prisoners not confined on board ship. There have been altogether 120 cases of measles, 75 of enteric, and about 30 of other ailments. There are at present 2,700 prisoners on board ship; 2,000 will be sent to St. Helena forthwith. The remainder will be kept on shore unless further accommodation can be provided in St. Helena.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): May I ask whether the illness among the prisoners and the deaths that have resulted therefrom are attributable to the fact that these men are confined on board ship? Will you show the same consideration to these prisoners as the Republican Government show for British prisoners at Pretoria?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I should say that the illness and deaths are not due to their having been on ships, because the number of deaths on shore is far in excess of those on water.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Have the Government considered the advisability of an exchange of prisoners?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

COUNT ADALBERT STERNBERG.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Count Adalbert Sternberg, who fought against the British troops at Paardeberg, and is the author of an article in the *Gaulois*, entitled "The World and England," was taken prisoner with General Cronje; and why he was released and allowed to come to this country.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I have no official knowledge of this matter. I have, however, ground for believing that this nobleman fell into the hands of our forces some two or three days before General Cronje's surrender, and that he was liberated on producing papers in proper order and on giving an explanation of his presence in the theatre of war which at the time seemed satisfactory.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Is it a fact that this officer has been

allowed to go to London, instead of being sent to St. Helena, because he is a German and the German Emperor interceded for him?

[The question was not answered.]

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is it the case that this gentleman concealed the fact that he was a combatant and represented himself as a newspaper correspondent?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I believe that that was the explanation he gave at the time. It then seemed satisfactory.

BOER THREATS TO SHOOT LOYAL ENGLISH BURGHERS.

MR. GORDON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Government have any information to the effect that ex-President Steyn has issued a proclamation that English burghers refusing to take up arms on the Boer side will be shot; and, if so, what steps the British Government propose to take in the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have not heard officially of any such proclamation, but I shall make inquiry.

CITY IMPERIAL VOLUNTEERS—CYCLIST CORPS EQUIPMENT.

MR. WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that the cyclist corps section of the City Imperial Volunteers were prohibited from taking revolvers with them to South Africa by the authorities and compelled to take rifles, and that since they have been doing scouting work the cyclists have obtained permission to travel without their rifles on account of the extra weight and the heavy travelling over the veldt, so that they are unarmed in the enemy's country, he will give immediate orders for revolvers being at once served out to all cyclists doing scouting duty in South Africa.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Rifles and not revolvers form part of the equipment of cyclist corps; we are not aware of Lord Roberts having made any such special arrangement as is described in the question, although it would be fully within his competence to do so.

ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS—STATISTICS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, now that nearly a month has elapsed since the date of the calling out of the Royal Reserve battalions, and as all those likely to join have presented themselves, he can state what number of men out of the anticipated 45,000 to 50,000 have been obtained; and, of those who presented themselves, how many failed to pass the medical examination.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There is no indication that all the men likely to join the Royal Reserve battalions have yet presented themselves. It has several times been explained that the number of 50,000 represented the outside limit required by the Constitution, and not the numbers it is expected to raise. The statement asked for will be published when the lists are closed.

CAPTAIN NORTON: The hon. Gentleman has not given any answer whatever to my question. Will he say how many men have been obtained up to the present day?

*MR. WYNDHAM: That is not asked in the question on the Paper. That comprises a number of suppositions which are unfounded. We do not expect to get 50,000. As a matter of fact there are about 24,000. They are coming in at the rate of 200 a day.

CAPTAIN NORTON: How many out of that number have failed to pass the medical examination?

*MR. WYNDHAM: The operation of the scheme is in full swing, and we are not going to publish the numbers and percentages from day to day. At the proper period the whole information will be laid before the House.

ROYAL RESERVE BATTALIONS—ELIGIBILITY OF ROYAL MARINES.

COMMANDER YOUNG (Berkshire, Wokingham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether non-commissioned officers and men who have served in the Royal Marine forces are eligible for service in the Royal Reserve battalions, on the same terms and subject to the same conditions as those who have

served in the Army; and, if so, whether recruiting officers have been so informed, and when.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. A memorandum was circulated to general officers commanding districts on the 27th March. But I now understand that a scheme is in preparation by which ex-marines who are not pensioners can be included in the reserves of the Navy.

RESERVISTS—SECTION D.—PENSIONS.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether in the case of Reservists in Section D who have been called up for active service in South Africa the whole time of their service in Sections A, B, C, or D counts for pensions; and, if so, whether they will be given an opportunity of re-engaging to complete twenty-one years service for pensions.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The question is under consideration.

RESERVISTS' FAMILIES' PAY—DATES OF PAYMENT.

MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the bad effects of making the payments to Reservists' families monthly instead of weekly or fortnightly, and whether any steps will be taken to make such payments at shorter intervals.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Representations in support of the hon. Member's view have been received by the Secretary of State, and the question has engaged his earnest attention. But it has been pointed out on the other side that more frequent payments mean a great increase of work for paymasters, whose hands are already full, and this would inevitably lead to delays of payment. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the Reservists' wives have now come to reckon on the lump sum at the beginning of the month, and their arrangements would be upset if it did not come. It has, therefore, been decided not to change the present method of payment.

RESERVISTS IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what will be the position of old soldiers now serving in the Metropolitan Police in the event of their accepting the invitation to re-enlist for one year; will they be entitled to receive half their pay while with the colours; and will their posts be kept open for them with a view to their return to the force.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): I must refer the hon. Member to an answer to a similar question given by the Secretary of State on the 2nd of March,* when he stated that metropolitan police constables cannot, as the law stands, join the Royal Reserve battalions without ceasing to be members of the force, and that, in the interest of the protection of the public, he was not disposed to recommend any change in the law.

WAR LOAN—IRISH SUBSCRIPTIONS.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed that the Irish allottees of the New War Loan should be registered in the first instance at the Bank of England, and whether it will be then necessary for such allottees as desire it, and at the cost of executing a power of attorney and other expenses, to have the registration of their allotments transferred to the books of the Bank of Ireland; and whether, having regard to the terms of the prospectus of the said loan, that the books of the loan will be kept at the Bank of England and the Bank of Ireland, he will consider the possibility of devising some means whereby the trouble and expenses of re-registering in the Bank of Ireland may be avoided.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am informed that if the Bank of Ireland were to inscribe stock in their books direct from the scrip as presented, they would have no means of knowing whether it was genuine, and there would consequently be a risk of fraud. Government Stock cannot be transferred from the books of the Bank of England to the Bank of Ireland (or

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxix., page 1521.

vice versâ) without a power of attorney as required by the National Debt Act, 1870. But if persons wanting to have their Stock inscribed in Ireland will lodge their scrip certificates with the Bank of Ireland that bank will send the certificates to the Bank of England, who will inscribe the stock *en bloc* immediately and transfer it to Ireland the same day. The only expense would be a single power of attorney, which would be a bank charge.

MISCONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS — COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state whether the Law Officers of the Crown have advised proceedings against certain contractors for the War Office, or whether he will consider the advisability of at once appointing a Committee to examine and report on the frauds alleged to have been committed.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to the question of my hon. and gallant friend I have to say that the Law Officers have informed us that there is no sufficient ground for criminal prosecution in these cases, and in these circumstances I think the sooner the Committee, to which my hon. friend refers, is appointed the better.

ARMY CONTRACTS FOR CYCLES—SHANNON CYCLE WORKS, LIMITED.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he has any objection to place on the list of contractors for the supply of cycles for the Army the name of Cole, Nelson, and Co., of the Shannon Cycle Works, Limerick.

*MR. WYNDHAM: If this firm will make an official application the usual inquiries will be made, and if they prove satisfactory their names will be included in the list.

YEOMANRY OFFICERS—ALLOWANCE FOR PERMANENT DUTIES.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether officers of Yeomanry regiments will receive during permanent duty the same allowances as those granted to Volunteer officers under paragraph 6 of the special Army Order relating to camps of exercise for Volunteer infantry brigades, 1900.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. Those who fulfil the conditions laid down in the Army Order will be granted the allowances. Detailed instructions for the Yeomanry will appear in the Army Orders for April.

VOLUNTEER CAMPS—SPECIAL CAPITATION GRANT.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Volunteer battalions can draw extra capitation grant if parade states show half strength in camp for fourteen days, irrespective of whether they are the same men, or whether their places are filled in part or in whole by other members of the same battalions for any portion of the fourteen days.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The same men must have been present for the whole fourteen days.

VOLUNTEER CYCLIST COMPANIES—CAPITATION GRANT.

COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, as regards Sub-section 3 of Section B of the Army Orders, dated 29th March, 1900, whether the special capitation allowance of £2 to each efficient member of a Volunteer cyclist company is to be a single or an annual grant.

*MR. WYNDHAM: It will be an annual grant.

RIFLE RANGES—MULLINGAR.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office can he state whether the land necessary for the extension of the rifle range at Mullingar has been acquired; and, if so, when will the range be completed.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The question of the acquisition or lease of the lands required for the ranges at Mullingar is under consideration, and until it is settled the extension cannot be proceeded with.

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT—STATUS OF OFFICERS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the increased importance of the Army Veterinary Department, which in South Africa alone is responsible for some 150,000 animals, valued at about £4,000,000, and seeing the unsatisfactory state of the Department, coupled with the fact that the proposed changes have been long under consideration, he will, pending prospective reforms, at one grant to the officers of the Department Military titles without prefix, which step has given such general satisfaction throughout the Army Medical Department, and has attracted to that Department a larger number of excellent students from the medical schools than heretofore.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The whole question of the status of the Army Veterinary Department is under consideration, and a decision will shortly be given.

ARMY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS — PHYSICAL FITNESS OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether officers appointed to command brigades of troops at home and in the colonies abroad are, prior to being gazetted, subjected to any medical examination as to their entire physical fitness for field service, and whether their powers of horsemanship and general activity are specially reported on by the officer who recommends them for the command of brigades.

*MR. WYNDHAM: All colonels are examined as to their physical fitness before being promoted to major-general. After this they are not examined unless there is some reason to doubt their fitness. There is no "officer who recommends for the command of brigades." Selections for these appointments are made by the Army Board, under the presidency of the Commander-in-Chief, and subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, and this board is fully acquainted with the horsemanship and other qualifications of the officers it recommends.

DELAGOA RAILWAY ARBITRATION.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any information to give the House in reference to the delay in stating the award of the Delagoa Railway arbitration.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Report, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, has been issued, but the tribunal give no reason for the delay.

SUGAR BOUNTIES—DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government has any official information to the effect that, as reported at Vienna, the French Government is now willing to consider an international agreement to abolish export bounties on sugar. And whether the Belgian Government is still engaged in the diplomatic negotiations deputed to it by the Brussels Sugar Conference when it adjourned *sine die* in June, 1898.

MR. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government are informed that, in accordance with the understanding come to at the Brussels Conference, negotiations are still being carried on by the Belgian Government with the view to an agreement between the Powers concerned for the abolition of sugar bounties; but Her Majesty's Government have received no official information to the effect indicated in the first paragraph of the question.

CHINESE BLUE-BOOKS—MAPS.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he could see his way to arrange, in connection with the issue of Blue-books such as that recently prepared on China, to include in the book maps illustrative of the geography of the less known districts referred to, in order to make the references more easily understood.

MR. BRODRICK: I am afraid the expense of adopting this suggestion would be prohibitive. The newly-published maps of China, such as those issued last year by Stanfords and this year by Bretschneider, will, I think, be found to give all the information desired.

FOREIGN OFFICE INTRODUCTIONS TO TRAVELLING BRITISH SUBJECTS.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can conveniently state what are the conditions governing the issue of letters of introduction given by the Foreign Office to British subjects travelling abroad, introducing them to ambassadors and other British representatives in foreign countries, and further, what are the rules followed by such representatives in acting upon such letters of introduction by introducing such persons to foreign Governments, especially where such further introductions imply the use of British influence in favour of such persons in the granting of concessions; and especially whether, in such cases, the ambassador or other representative, before taking any such action, first satisfies himself as to the financial standing and responsibility of persons so introduced and recommended to foreign Governments by him.

MR. BRODRICK: Letters of introduction to Her Majesty's representatives abroad are only granted in favour of persons either personally known to the Secretary of State or recommended by someone in whom he has confidence. No precise rules are laid down in regard to letters of introduction to govern the action of Her Majesty's representatives, which must depend on the particular circumstances of each case. Formal letters of introduction are supplemented by more detailed letters in cases in which it seems desirable.

DEATH DUTIES—NEW SOUTH WALES LEGISLATION.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.): I beg to ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that under the provisions of the Companies (Death Duties) Act, 1899, of New South Wales (being Act No. 53 of 1899), agricultural, mining, or other companies which are domiciled in the United Kingdom, but which carry on business in New South Wales, are liable to death duties in the colony on the death of their members, although such members are not domiciled in the colony; whether the executors of such deceasing member if he died domiciled in the United Kingdom, would be liable to death duty under the Finance Act, 1894; and whether the exaction of the duty under the New South Wales Act would entitle executors to allowance under Section 20 of the Finance Act, 1894; and, if not, whether he will take steps to provide that the same property shall not be subject both to imperial and colonial death duty.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am informed that the Act, which has not yet been sanctioned, imposes death duties of the nature described in the first paragraph of the question. The answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. In reply to the third paragraph, the only way in which payment of both imperial and colonial duty can be avoided would be by the issue of an Order in Council applying Section 20, Sub-section (3) of the Finance Act, 1894, to New South Wales. This has not yet been done, and it can only be done if the laws of the colony conform to the conditions prescribed in the sub-section referred to.

TRUST INVESTMENTS—CANADIAN GOVERNMENT SECURITIES.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a statement reported to have been made by the Finance Minister of Canada to the effect that an arrangement had been made whereby Canadian Government securities would be raised to the rank of trust investments in this country; and whether he has any information to this effect; and, if so, what were the regulations which it was proposed to make in connection with the arrangement.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No final settlement has yet been arrived at, but arrangements are in progress which will, I hope, lead to a satisfactory settlement of the question.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, 1897—CLAUSE 3.

MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can give the reason why the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, in his Sixty-first Annual Report just issued, has failed to carry out the provision contained in the seventh sub-section of Clause 3 of the

Workmen's Compensation Act, 1897, in reference to certifying schemes under this Act of Parliament, and whether he can on an early date lay upon the Table a statement containing the information provided for in the sub-section.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I think that the reason why the hon. Member has not been able to find the information indicated in a recently issued Report must be that the Report of which he is thinking is the Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, and not of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies. I may add that the hon. Member can satisfy himself that the Chief Registrar has not failed to carry out the provisions of Sub-section 7 of Section 3 of the Workmen's Compensation Act, by referring to the Chief Registrar's Report for 1898, published last year, and to the Report for 1899, which was presented to the House in February last, and is now being printed.

PRESERVATIVES IN CREAM.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been called to recent prosecutions for adding preservatives to cream, resulting in conflicting decisions; whether, seeing that two Departmental Committees are investigating this question, he can take any steps to prevent any further prosecutions pending the decision of these Committees.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I have seen the reports of the cases to which the hon. Member refers, but I have no power to interfere with the exercise of the discretion of the local authorities by whom proceedings under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts are initiated. I do not doubt, however, that those authorities will bear in mind the fact to which the hon. Member calls attention—namely, that a Departmental Committee, over which my right hon. friend the Member for Wigtownshire presides, is now making a full inquiry into the subject of the use of preservatives in food. The matter is not one which falls within the purview of Lord Wenlock's Committee on Milk Standards, to which I understand the hon. Member also to refer.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE—ARGENTINE IMPORTS PROHIBITED.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether there have been symptoms of foot and mouth disease amongst cattle recently imported from Argentina, and what steps have been taken to prevent the spread of the disease.

*MR. LONG: A cargo comprising some 240 cattle and 1,100 sheep was brought to the foreign animals wharf at Deptford from Argentina by the steamship "Ethelhilda" on Monday last, and on examination a large number of the cattle were found to be affected with foot and mouth disease. The animals were landed for immediate slaughter at a part of the wharf set aside for the purpose, and steps were taken for the disinfection of persons and things which had been in contact with the animals, and of the hides, skins, and offal, by which infection might be spread. An Order was also made prohibiting the importation of animals from the Argentine, in pursuance of our statutory obligations in that behalf.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS IN LONDON SUBURBS.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received an application from the Vestry of Hammersmith with regard to the service of workmen's trains from that station on the District Railway, in which complaint is made that no workmen's trains left the station later than 6.34 a.m.; and whether the complaint has been brought before the Railway and Canal Commissioners, and what action has been taken in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir, I have received this application containing the complaint specified. The company have required that the matter shall be referred for the decision of the Railway and Canal Commissioners, and such reference will accordingly be made.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received a complaint from the Fulham Vestry with regard to the service of workmen's trains from that station, and what action has been taken in the matter.

MR. RITCHIE: The same answer applies.

RAILWAY FATALITIES BETWEEN CHARING CROSS AND NEW CROSS.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many platelayers and other men working on the railway between Charing Cross and New Cross were killed during the year 1899.

MR. RITCHIE: Three platelayers have been reported by the South Eastern Railway as killed. The Board have not been informed of any other fatal accidents.

EXCURSION STEAMERS.

MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has any intention of bringing in a Bill to exclude from the provisions of the 503rd Section of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, excursion steamers trading on the coasts of the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, and the coasts of France and Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Germany.

MR. RITCHIE: No such legislation is contemplated.

BETHNAL GREEN BOARD OF GUARDIANS—GRATUITIES TO OFFICERS.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he received, as long ago as on the 8th October last, from the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians a communication containing evidence taken by a committee of that board tending to show that gratuities had been paid on a large scale to relieving officers by medical officers in respect of the certification of lunatics, as well as by certain metropolitan licensed houses; and whether he has made any inquiries regarding these allegations; and whether, in case of his being satisfied that they are true, he intends taking any steps to prevent a repetition of such practices.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The facts are as stated in the question. I have communicated with the Lunacy Commissioners on the subject, and I find that they have cautioned the proprietors of metropolitan licensed houses that wherever the practice of giving relieving officers gratuities of the kind referred to has obtained it must be at once discontinued, and the Commissioners have no reason to doubt that their requirement will be respected. They have also communicated their views to the Wiltshire justices, as one of the licensed houses affected was licensed by those justices. As regards the officers of the guardians, I have directed that an inquiry shall be held by an inspector of the Local Government Board. The inquiry will take place as soon as possible, and on receipt of his Report I shall have to decide what further steps, if any, it will be necessary for me to take in the matter.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: As arising out of the answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the facts now disclosed as to the practice of paying such Commissions, he will arrange with the Home Secretary to insert adequate provisions in the Lunacy Bill now before the House so as to effectually check the practice in future?

MR. CHAPLIN: Obviously that is a question I cannot answer without first consulting my right hon. friend.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the difficult position of many local authorities who are being pressed to erect or reconstruct sewerage works, he can take steps to hasten the Report of the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal, or give the House any idea of the probable date of the said Report.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The questions submitted to the Commission involve detailed and prolonged scientific research, and I cannot say when their Report is likely to be made. With a view to hastening their conclusions they have recently obtained the sanction of the Treasury to an increase of their scientific staff, and they are anxious to report at the earliest possible date.

VACCINATION OF PUPIL TEACHERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education will he explain on what grounds the Education Department has insisted, in answer to the Linden Road School Board of Gloucester, on F. Clifford being vaccinated as a condition precedent to his being articled as pupil teacher, although he has already had the smallpox, though by the 30 and 31 Vic., c. 84, s. 31, he cannot be ordered by justices to be vaccinated; and under what statute the Department enforces the operation as a condition precedent to employment as teacher.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): Clifford seems to have been rejected by mistake. Satisfactory proof that a candidate had already had smallpox would be a sufficient ground for dispensing with vaccination. The Board of Education does not enforce vaccination; but in choosing teachers it requires those to be taken who are protected against smallpox in the interest of the children in the schools.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Then the objection to this candidate has been withdrawn?

SIR J. GORST: Yes.

TELEPHONING CABLEGRAMS.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that although direct cables have been established between Liverpool and Havre, and Liverpool and Hamburg, telegrams between those cities still take at least nearly an hour in transmission and delivery; that cablegrams between the Liverpool and New York Cotton Exchanges are sent and replies received within a few minutes, and that messages despatched daily viâ the United States to Bremen reach that city an hour earlier than messages sent to the same place from the Liverpool Post Office by British wire; that the arrangement proposed by him for telephoning cablegrams after business hours through the Exchange Post Office is insufficient for the requirements of the cotton trade, especially during the cotton season, and that nothing short of direct telephonic communication between the cable companies and their clients will meet the exigencies of the case; and whether, in view of the importance to commerce of quick telegraphic communication between Liverpool, the Continent, and the United States by reason of the limited duration of market hours, and of the increasing diversion of business from Liverpool owing to the lack of telegraphic facilities, the best efforts of the Post Office will be exerted to remove insufficiencies in the present system to which their attention has been frequently called.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): Under normal conditions the time occupied in the transmission of telegrams between Liverpool and Havre and between Liverpool and Hamburg is about twenty-five minutes in the one case, and thirty-five minutes in the other. The Post Office has no information as to the time occupied in delivery abroad. Any telegrams sent between Liverpool and Bremen by way of the United States would not pass through the Post Office, and the Post Office has no knowledge of the time occupied in transmission, as compared with the ordinary route. The cable company could not adopt the route viâ America consistently with its arrangements with the Administrations concerned. It is hoped that the arrangement recently made for the telephoning of telegrams after business hours through the Exchange Post Office will be found to meet the requirements of the case, and that the arrangement should, at any rate, have a trial. The importance of efficient telegraphic facilities between Liverpool and the Continent is, of course, recognised, and measures for improving the communication between this country and the Continent are under discussion between the Post Office and the Treasury.

BRIGHTON TELEGRAPH OFFICE—PROMOTION OF TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether promotion from the general body of telegraphists depends upon efficiency, good conduct, and seniority; and whether three telegraphists, fully qualified, have recently been passed over in the Brighton tele-

graph office; and whether the Postmaster General can state why the usual conditions have been departed from in this case.

MR. HANBURY: The Tweedmouth Committee reported on the subject of promotion—

"We feel that promotion to the supervising classes should not be regarded as a matter of right or of seniority. It is the interest both of the public and of the Post Office service that the supervising classes should be composed of servants the most fitted to supervise, and men should be selected for these posts on the ground of their proved capacity in all respects to fill them efficiently."

In a recent case at Brighton the officer standing No. 4 on his class was certified to be the best qualified to perform the duties of the post to which he was promoted, and his promotion was strictly in accordance with the principles above laid down. I shall be glad to show the hon. Member the Papers.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS' PENSIONS.

MR. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the writers or temporary copyists who came into the service between September, 1870, and August, 1871, in reply to advertisements of the Civil Service Commissioners, and were since appointed to permanent posts, are allowed to reckon for pension purposes the temporary service rendered by them between September, 1870, and August, 1871, as equivalent to that rendered by the old class of writers who are allowed, under a Treasury Minute, to count all their temporary service for pension.

MR. HANBURY: The writers in question were appointed after the Order in Council of 4th June, 1870, usually on a scale rising by annual increments. In 1871 it was decided to end this system, and the men appointed under it were given their choice between (*a*) retiring with a gratuity, (*b*) continuing their service at a rate of remuneration equal to their existing emoluments, and (*c*) retiring with their gratuity and then entering themselves upon the ordinary register as temporary copyists at 10d. an hour. In the last case they were allowed to reckon for pension purposes their service prior to 19th August, 1871, on condition that they repaid the gratuity and that they were transferred to the Establishment without interruption of service.

ENNIS SUB-POST OFFICE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will favourably consider the establishment of a sub-post office in Mill Street, Ennis.

MR. HANBURY: I find that the proposed site would be less than 300 yards distant from an existing town sub-office in Jail Street, and only a little more than that distance from the head office. It is considered that in having two post offices a town of the size of Ennis is sufficiently well served, this accommodation being quite equal to what is usually afforded at towns of similar size and importance.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: They want three.

BOAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FOYNES AND KILRUSH.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will consider the advisability of subsidising and establishing during the coming season a boat service between Foynes and Kilrush for the convenience of tourists who may desire to visit those districts.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): There are no funds available under the Railways (Ireland) Act, 1896, for the purpose of subsidising and establishing a boat service between the places mentioned in the question.

PAUPER LUNATICS IN BELFAST.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspectors of lunatic asylums in Ireland have frequently in their reports for some years past urged the necessity of providing additional accommodation for pauper lunatics in Belfast; and whether a suitable site has been secured and plans for a new asylum have been completed two years ago and approved by the board of control and the governors of the lunatic

asylum, and why the building has not yet been begun, although the inspectors now urge for the additional accommodation.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. As regards the second paragraph, the Board of Control having been abolished by the provisions of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, it was deemed advisable to defer the erection of the new building until the Asylum Committee, to whom the functions of the late board of control were transferred, came into office. The Committee recently consulted an independent expert in asylum architecture with regard to the plans, and his report is now under their consideration.

BALLYSHANNON PETTY SESSIONS—MR. MOONEY, J.P.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report of the Ballyshannon Petty Sessions, held on Tuesday, the 27th March, at which Mr. Patrick A. Mooney, J.P., was fined 10s. and costs for an assault on Mr. John Mulligan on the 17th of March; and whether he will bring the matter before the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): My attention has been directed to a report of the proceedings referred to in the first paragraph. The matter has already been brought to the notice of the Lord Chancellor, and is now under his consideration.

CARNDONAGH LOAN FUND SOCIETY—RECEIVER'S REMUNERATION.

MR. T. B. CURRAN (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Baird, of Moville, has been appointed receiver over the dissolved loan fund society at Carndonagh, County Donegal, at a salary of £50 per annum; and, if so, out of what funds will this salary be paid; whether he is aware that the usual system of payment to receivers holding similar positions is at the rate of 5 per cent. commission and expenses; and whether any competent applicant from the town of Carndonagh applied for the receivership upon such terms.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. G. W. BALFOUR): Mr. Baird, *of Moville,* has been appointed receiver over the Carndonagh Loan Fund Society, not at a salary of £50 per annum or any other fixed annual sum, but at a commission, or percentage, to be hereafter decided upon, which will be paid from the assets of the dissolved society. The answer to the second inquiry is in the affirmative. The clerk of the local loan fund applied for the receivership without specifying any terms as to the payment. The Loan Fund Board, in the exercise of their undoubted rights, preferred the other applicant.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT—DUBLIN CASE.

MR. AUSTIN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the case of a man named James Carroll, who was killed on the 15th July last year by an accident in the discharge of his duties as employee of Messrs. Watkins and Company, brewers, of Dublin; whether he is aware that this man left a widow and three children unprovided for, and that the Court of Appeal held that this case did not come within the operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897, because the accident did not actually occur on the premises of the brewery; and whether the Government intend to take any steps to extend the Act so as to cover accidents of this kind.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of the facts of the case referred to in the hon. Gentleman's question, nor do I know whether he has accurately represented the legal decision; but it has never been denied by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary that the Act would require some amendment, and I believe he has more than once stated that there are points on which the Act might not only be amended but extended with advantage.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Adjourned Debate on the Motion for the appointment of a Joint Committee on Municipal Trading, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, Sittings of the House." —(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 185; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 97.)

AYES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bartley, George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Brist'l)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Heref'd)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gilliat, John Saunders
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Rt Hn G. J. (St George's
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Rt. Hn. A Staveley (Staffs.)
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leighton, Stanley
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn Walter (Liverpool
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W)
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Milbank, Sir Powlett C. John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Mount, William George
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute)
Murray, C. J. (Coventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newt'n)
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hon Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Savory, Sir Joseph
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Sidebotham, J. (W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbysh)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Sir Henry M (Lambeth
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunt'n
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B Stuart-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wyndham, George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Bainbridge, Emerson
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Colville, John

Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (South'ton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. M. (Leith)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir E. Temperley
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Hedderwick, T. Charles H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn. Sir U
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Crae, George
Maddison, Fred.
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs, S W
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Runciman, Walter
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarsh.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Steadman, William Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merth'r
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woods, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Courtenay Warner and
Mr. Dewar.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary Ritchie.*)

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I think that in welcoming this Bill I shall be expressing the sentiments of the whole House. There are only two points in connection with this measure upon which I will venture to offer any remarks. Those points are, firstly, the arbitration proposals, and, secondly, the class of workers who will not come under the protection of the Bill proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. Upon the point of arbitration I would only say that we have an analogy under the Factory Act, which I venture to think has worked very disastrously to workers in factories and workshops. I regret very much that this system has found its way into the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman. I understand that the railway servants of the country have accepted the tribunal which he proposes for determining cases in dispute, and I only wish upon this point to offer a prophecy that the railway servants will live to regret their acceptance of the arbitration proposals under this Bill. I wish now to come to my second point, namely, that of the large body of railway servants who undergo all the dangers and risks of shunting, and of all other operations incidental to railway working, and who will not come under the scope of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill; I mean the workers upon locomotives in factories. I have been four years the chairman of a Committee appointed to inquire into and report upon certain miscellaneous dangerous trades, which made a Report upon this subject in 1896, and we made eighteen specific and definite recommendations, which are evidently of a similar character to those which are anticipated under this Bill. I should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the Report of that Committee to which I have alluded, especially to the schedule of accidents in Appendix IV. The record of those accidents is not complete, and it was impossible for the Committee to get an absolutely complete list of the accidents which occur to those employed upon locomotives in factories. The list has been compiled from all the available sources, such as the Returns of Her Majesty's inspectors of factories, Board of Trade Returns, reports from trade union secretaries, newspaper reports, etc. That is the case we have to meet, and I doubt whether it is in the power of the right hon. Gentleman or any of his colleagues in other Departments to get a complete list of the accidents to the men employed upon locomotives in factories which do not come under the Board of Trade. There were fourteen fatal accidents between October, 1894, and December, 1895, in one small

district in the North-east of England alone. I claim for these men working on locomotives in factories the same protection as is being offered to the men working on the great trunk railways. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to look very carefully into the Report which I have alluded to. I have asked questions repeatedly upon this question in this House. On the 20th July of last year* I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary—

"Whether his attention has been called to the case of George Burnam, who recently received fatal injuries while shifting a bogie along some rails at Messrs. Cammell's works, Sheffield; and whether, in view of the rider added by the coroner's jury to their verdict of accidental death, which was to the effect that there was not sufficient room at the sides of the line for the men to work in safety, he will consider the advisability of issuing, at an early date, special rules embodying the recommendations of the Dangerous Trades Committee which apply to the use of locomotives in factories."

And the right hon. Gentleman replied—

"I am making inquiries into the case referred to. As regards the second paragraph of the question, the dangers attending the use of locomotives in factories seem to be closely connected with the questions which have been referred to the Royal Commission on Accidents to the Servants of Railway Companies and Truck Owners, and I must await the Report of the Commission before deciding as to the issue of special rules on the subject. In the meantime, the factory inspectors will do their best to secure improvement of the conditions where possible."

My point is that these men are now outside the Board of Trade regulations, and here is a unique opportunity to include them under this Bill now that this measure is before the House. No protection whatever is offered for these railway servants. When I received that answer from the Home Secretary I forwarded it to Lord James, who replied that he would do the best he could, although he was afraid that the matter did not come within the scope and power of his Committee. I particularly ask the right hon. Gentleman's attention to this matter, because if he does not take these men into his Bill I do not really see how they are to get any protection at all. I am simply asking the right hon. Gentleman to extend to these men that protection which they deserve, and which he is extending to similar servants upon the great trunk lines. If the right hon. Gentleman will look at page 14 of the Report of the Royal Commission he will see what they say in regard to "dead" buffers. They say—

"The evil effects of the dead buffers, especially upon the railway traffic and rolling stock, were so clearly recognised by the railway companies that in 1889 a resolution was passed by the associated companies resolving that no wagons having dead buffers built after that date should be received on the line of any company—and by this resolution the owners of such wagons, for the most part private persons or bodies other than railway companies, are bound."

If private owners and private persons are now bound by that rule, surely they might be bound also by the rules which he proposes to make under this Bill. I do ask him either to accept my proposition that these persons should come within the scope of this Bill, or else that he should bring pressure to bear upon the Home Secretary to induce him to bring them within the scope and protection of the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman has under his charge.

MR. LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington): I desire to express my gratitude to the Government and to the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of my constituency, which contains a good many railway men, for having introduced this measure. I consider that it is very creditable to the Government that they have not disappointed us with regard to social legislation because of the war. Many of us at the general election gave very strong expressions of our desire to further social legislation, and it certainly is a matter of very great importance to those of us who did so to see a Bill of this character brought forward. It seems to me that this Bill falls within the category of those measures which, without doing an injustice to the rich, confers a most emphatic boon upon the poor. This Bill, I think, will save many violent deaths and prevent the infliction of many agonising injuries if it is passed into law. I should like to say one word of very hearty congratulation to the Royal Commission which sat upon this matter, and particularly to Lord James who presided over it. It is not infrequently the case with Royal Commissions that there is a tendency on the part of those who form them to endeavour to accentuate their differences rather than

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxiv., page 1,376.

the reverse. In the case of this Royal Commission, presided over with wonderful tact and judgment by Lord James, its members appear to have had a most sincere desire not to accentuate but to isolate differences, and after sitting eighteen days they have arrived at a condensed Report thoroughly to the point, and which, if it is embodied in this Bill, will bring a very great amount of benefit to those immediately concerned. As for the need for this legislation, out of 400,000 railway employees, 500 lives are lost every year on our railways. In round numbers, I think there are 12,400 men injured every year on the same railways. This country might engage in a not inconsiderable war. and the result would not be more calamitous than a single year of these accidents on railways. These facts will all be found in the Report of the Royal Commission. I am not putting forward for the moment that there is any strict analogy between the case of passengers and railway employees, but it is very significant that, whereas in the case of railway employees no less than 1·24 per thousand are killed and 31 per thousand are injured in a year, of passengers only one in 7,000,000 is killed and only one in 568,000 is injured. It must be remembered that these figures include the men employed during all hours of the day and night, who are rushing over stations and facing points, and who have to deal with every conceivable kind of passengers, however idiotic. I think it is a great tribute to the great railways of this kingdom that they carry their passengers with such a marvellous result. Here I wish to pay also a tribute to the members of the great railway interests who were members of this Royal Commission—men like Sir George Paget and Sir Charles Scotter—for there was not a voice put forward on behalf of the great railway companies on this Commission to criticise these proposals; not a voice was heard in opposition on the ground of the expense which undoubtedly must ultimately fall upon the companies, who will have to put these proposals in force. So much with regard to the deaths that are caused every year on our railway system. The House will also be interested to know that the injuries which occur on our railway systems are enormous; 12,378 men on an average are injured every year, and I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the injuries sustained by railway servants are generally of a very serious character indeed. They do not work, as many men work, with horses, which have the generous impulse to step aside when a man meets with a fall. Railway servants work on iron, and among wagons having great momentum and containing heavy weights. The accidents to shunters and platelayers from trains running along the lines are, as a rule, very serious, and do not give the victim a second chance. There are some very remarkable figures in the subject contained in a recent Board of Trade Return. Of men working on the permanent way ninety-nine on an average are killed, and only 239 injured. That is to say that nearly half the men who meet with accidents on the permanent way are killed outright. That will enable the House to form a judgment of the serious character of the injuries that are inflicted on them. It is worse still with regard to the men whose duty it is to stand on or cross the line. One hundred and twenty-three of these men on an average are killed every year, and 245 injured, or more than 50 per cent. are actually killed outright. The House will thus see the remorseless character of the injuries inflicted on these men. I remember reading a book written by a very clever man, who imagined a state of things far in advance of the present time, and one of the things he pictured was a number of machines broken up by the enlightened people of the period because of the injuries they had inflicted. That is not, of course, a practical proposal, but it illustrates the character of the life these men have to lead, and the dangers they have to face. I have said enough as to the urgency of this measure. It was unanimously recommended by a Royal Commission, composed of members representing the railway servants and the great railway interests, and I think it is honourable to the railway companies that they have not opposed these reforms, burdensome though they may be, and it is honourable also to the representatives of the railway servants who have accepted these benefits in the spirit in which they have been offered. One word as to the procedure of this Bill. The hon. Gentleman who preceded me, and who is more familiar than I am with the Factory Acts, uttered a note of warning with regard to what he called the arbitration provision in this Bill, which he considered

to be analogous to that in the Factory Acts. I have always understood that the objection which exists to the arbitration clause in the Factory Acts is that the responsibility of the Home Office is delegated to an arbitrator outside the office. In this Bill the proposal is that the Board of Trade shall certify the dangerous trade, and shall initiate legislation after inquiry, and there is an appeal not to an outside arbitrator, but to the Railway Commission, which consists of railway experts presided over by a judge. The hon. Gentleman may therefore console himself if he imagines that there is a similar provision in this Bill to that in the Factory Acts. The proposal is quite different, and the tribunal of appeal has no analogy to that in the Factory Acts. This Bill, of course, embodies a tendency which is very frequent of putting additional work—I may almost say legislative power—on one of our great Departments of State. It is far too late now to object to such a tendency. But I would point out, and I think my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade has it in view, that it is worse than useless to pile important duties on a Government Department unless it is also given an additional staff. A multiplicity of duties has lately been imposed on the Board of Trade. It has to decide important engineering questions, to decide whether they will affect the trade of the country, whether they are reasonable or not under all the circumstances, and what period should be given to carry them out. These are all very difficult questions indeed, and deserve that a great deal of time should be spent on them. My last word will be that I trust the recommendation of the Royal Commission that a substantial addition should be made to the staff of the Board of Trade will find acceptance not only from my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, but also from a more important body—the Treasury.

*SIR J. W. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I have listened to the comments of the hon. and learned Gentleman with considerable interest. He devoted a great portion of his speech to the injuries which railway servants receive. That is one of the melancholy facts connected with the carrying on of what are known as dangerous trades, and if it were not so the House would not be as unanimous as it is in passing the Second Reading of this Bill. At the same time, I would wish to enter a *caveat*, as one who has been interested all my life in two very dangerous trades—mining and railway work—and as one who has, perhaps, a longer experience than any other Member of this House in these trades. What I am a little afraid of is that the Bill does not clearly define what the duties of the Board of Trade are and what are the duties of the railway companies. The Bill is very generally drawn—rather confusingly drawn, if I may say so, with all due deference to the right hon. Gentleman's draughtsman. It does not deal with specific points, and that is a great disadvantage. I think, also, there is danger in taking responsibility off the shoulders of those who ought to bear it, and placing it in the hands of the Board of Trade and officers of the Government. It is most dangerous to those employed in the management of railways to take away the responsibility which ought to devolve on them. After a long experience of railway matters I can say that there is nothing that railway companies are more ready to adopt than anything which will prevent the terrible accidents which are so frequently before the House. So far as my vote is concerned, it will go, as it has gone on other occasions where dangerous trade were concerned, in favour of doing everything that can be done in order to diminish the risk of accidents. A very excellent table drawn up by one of the railway managers was submitted in evidence before the Royal Commission. It shows that, taking the deaths from accidents in mines and on railways, that freedom from the Board of Trade in the case of railways has had the very same effect as being under the regulations of the Home Office. In the case of collieries there has been a steady decrease in the loss of life under the regulations of the Home Office, and the same in the railway world, without the regulations contemplated in this Bill; not, however, that this Bill is not required. I find that from 1876 to 1881 the deaths per thousand in mines was 2·39, and on railways 2·61; from 1881 to 1885 2 and 2·05; from 1886 to 1890 1·83 and 1·58; from 1891 to 1895, 1·52 and 1·52; and from 1896 to 1898, 1·37 and 1·24. That shows that the Board of Trade or the Home Office cannot do everything, and that care must be taken not to discourage those regulations and inventions which em-

ployers of men are bound to provide. I know the right hon. Gentleman does not intend to take the responsibility off the shoulders of those who ought to bear it. I can see that all through his Bill. On some railway lines the loss of life is much greater than on others, and that, of course, should command the attention of the Board of Trade. After all, these regulations mean that you bring employers who are careless of the lives of their men up to the standard of those who are most careful. That is a very great point gained; it takes a good deal of the point off what my hon. friend opposite said to the effect that the railway companies are to be commiserated. I do not think the railway companies are to be commiserated for having to do that which is right and needful, to diminish the loss of life and reduce it to the smallest possible amount. But having done that, do not let us destroy the inventive powers of ingenious and practical men employed on the railways of this country, to whom this country owes so much, by placing certain inventions under the patronage, as it were, of the Board of Trade. I think there was a very great catastrophe just averted in connection with automatic brakes a year ago. If the automatic brake urged so pertinaciously in one of the Government departments had been adopted, it would have ended in a complete fiasco. There is something to me very pleasant and very tempting about the idea of automatic couplings. I have paid some attention to the question, and I very much doubt if we have yet got an automatic coupling which is a safe coupling, and likely to bring about less loss of life than there is with the old rudimentary couplings used. The figures laid before us do not bear the test of accurate examination. Those who have seen these automatic couplings at work in America (practical men) have pointed out to me how under the English system these automatic couplings would not be equal to what is required here. If automatic couplings are adopted, which I quite agree it will be necessary to do sooner or later, and the sooner the better, we have this great difficulty to face—they cannot be placed on the enormous rolling stock of the kingdom without a great deal of trouble and expense, although the automatic process may be applied to the new stock at comparatively little expense. Then you come to the difficulty in our large railway system of having one set of wagons with automatic couplings and another set without them, and your economic troubles begin. All these things have to be contemplated and thoroughly investigated when this Bill goes into Committee, which I hope will be a Committee of the whole House. The interest of the great transit trade in passengers and goods in this country must be very carefully considered; but human life and the safety of human life ought to be the first object in view in this House.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I am very glad to have the opportunity of saying a few words on this Bill, although I have not had the extensive experience of my hon. friend opposite. My experience is confined to working traffic on a small scale on what is practically a branch goods station. I hope that this Bill, with some amendment, will pass this session. Perhaps the most useful clause in the Bill is the one providing a better system of inspection by the Board of Trade of dangerous places. This clause especially commends itself very strongly not only to those who take a philanthropic interest in preventing injury and loss of life, but to those who have a practical knowledge of the working of railways. I hope that the inspection will be so arranged that it will work as satisfactorily as the inspections which are carried out by the Home Office, and that the inspection by the Board of Trade will be on substantially the same principles, which are approved of by men employed on railways, and that care will be taken to prevent any clashing between the work of the two Departments. Passing from that, I would turn to Clause 1. It is divided into three subsections, and in regard to the first, I think that the mode in which the subjects come under it and in the schedule is proper and right; only I hope that some method may be adopted by which in some of the subjects there enumerated the time for carrying out particular alterations may be specified. I regret that there are two subjects dealt with in the Report which are not placed in that schedule. The first is loose shackles. I know that there is a greater degree of safety in coupling loose shackles than tight shackles; and I do not see that any great length of time would be required to adopt loose shackles

universally. The Board of Trade might, perhaps, fix it at a year and a half. The other matter that might have come in is the use of spring buffers. There is no doubt that coupling is more safe with spring than with dead buffers, and I do not know why the Board of Trade should not at once in the Bill lay down some regulation for providing spring buffers. There may be some question as to what the period should be within which they should be provided—the Report of the Commission hints at ten years; but from what I have heard, in some parts of the country it is thought that a longer period may be required. Another matter is signal lamps. The real danger of working signal lamps is that the shunter has at present to use both hands; and it would be a great matter if a signal lamp could be invented which could be worked by one hand. Two workmen of my own spent their evenings last winter in inventing such a lamp; and it was tried by the London and North Western Railway Company. I do not know whether my hon. and gallant friend has seen it. I believe the London and North Western Railway Company have a lamp of their own, which I understand is a better one than the one I have referred to; and there might be a time limit within which the use of these lamps should be made imperative. I think that some observations may fairly be made as to the very broad and vague lines on which the third sub-section is drawn. It really gives enormous powers to the Board of Trade. I do not understand why, with all the experience the Board of Trade have had, they should not by this time have been able to appoach the exact kind of thing which they think should be introduced. I suppose they do contemplate under this clause bringing in things of very great importance, because no doubt sub-section 3 is the motive for Clause 12. Now, by that clause the Board of Trade may require some expenditure to be made which would be a very severe burden on the railway companies, even compelling them to break faith with their debenture creditors. I infer that they allude to such things as the reconstruction of shunting sidings or the compulsory adoption of automatic couplings, which would render much of the rolling stock of the companies valueless. I think we ought to try in Committee to define more clearly what it is that the Board of Trade want to do in these matters. With regard to this branch of the subject, the Report lays down some principles which ought to be observed. It says that where it is in contemplation to make general rules or specific orders care should be exercised so as not to unduly interfere with the trade of the country. The Board of Trade have introduced a clause which says that the Railway Commissioners shall inquire into this. Now what I wish to draw to the attention of the House is that in the provisions which give these vast powers to the Board of Trade some such restrictions as the Royal Commission suggested should apply to their rules in the first instance. Such restrictions should be inserted in the Bill itself, and the order required to be made should be subject to a provision against any undue haste being made to put it into operation. These orders of the Board of Trade may interfere very widely not only with the companies themselves, but with the general carrying trade of the country, and traders ought to be protected in some reasonable way in order to enable them to carry on their trade without undue apprehension. Although these may all be questions for Committee, it is only right that we should sketch out those matters which we think ought to be dealt with beforehand, and to which the attention of the Board of Trade ought to be directed. Now, I should like to say just one word as to the Railway Commissioners. I am one of the few in this House who have been a suitor before the Railway Commissioners, and I do not think that anyone who has been before that body in such a capacity is quite satisfied with that court. It is a very costly and very technical court, unable in many cases to give general effect to the decisions at which it arrives. I do not know whether the Board of Trade considers that the existing machinery is adapted to the necessities of its present work. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to say whether he has considered the present constitution of that court and what alterations he considers necessary to adapt it to the new work of dealing with rules and orders made under this Bill. These are a few of the matters I have thought it right to bring to the attention of the House, but there are others which will properly form the subject of discussion in Committee. So far as I am concerned,

Mr. Tomlinson.

I think every effort ought to be made to pass this Bill through Parliament, and I agree with my hon. friend opposite that a Bill of such extreme importance ought to be discussed in Committee of the whole House.

*MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I am sure after the two speeches we have listened to—the one of the hon. Baronet, and the other of the hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for Preston—great hopes are held that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will be able to bring this Bill through all its various stages unaltered, unless it is further improved in the direction of safety. In both the speeches to which I have alluded, the hon. Members who made them admit the need of this reform and also express their desire to promote it. The hon. Member for Preston, to whose speech I listened with great interest, went into details, and spoke of spring buffers and other things, and appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to put them in a definite way in the schedule of the Bill. Now, I am quite certain if the hon. Member and others representing railway interests pursued their course in this direction, and saw the right hon. Gentleman on the subject, that he would not be an opponent of the Bill in that direction. With regard to what has been said about the Royal Commission, I also must pay my tribute of respect to that Commission for the manner in which it has done its work, although I do not think for a moment that the Commission exhausted its subject. No doubt it had to sacrifice some little thoroughness of inquiry and investigation in order that a Report might be obtained quickly. I do not complain of that, and, much as I am pleased at the introduction of this Bill by the right hon. Gentleman, I am not in the jubilant mood of a great many hon. Members of this House. Railway men have waited too long for reforms against which no arguments have been urged except the one that they will cost money. The right. hon. Gentleman was good enough to grant a Return of ten years shunting accidents, from which it appears that the whole number of men employed in this dangerous occupation—19,000—have been killed or injured during the last ten years. This is a matter which hon. and gallant Gentlemen will see the force of. Here is an army of the soldiers of industry 19,000 strong, and in ten years nearly every one of those men is put out of action at one time or other, a large proportion being killed. That fact in itself is sufficient to justify something being done. Last year many of us recognised that there was not sufficient force behind the right hon. Gentleman to carry his Bill, and I am only too pleased that to-day we have a Bill before us which stands a very fair chance of passing into law this session. As to the opinions we hold on this question, I may refer to the fact that in the Amendment I moved to the address last year, I asked for automatic couplings and a better inspection of railways; the first the right hon. Gentleman agreed to, the latter he did not. In this Bill I find nothing about automatic couplings, but the better inspection is granted. For more than a quarter of a century the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants have been advocating, at great expense, every reform indicated in the Bill and some that are not, and it has taken the whole of that time for this House to consider the question. This Bill cannot be called a bold attempt to deal with this matter, which is probably in its favour, as it increases its chance of passing into law. Neither is it in any way a final settlement, but it is a step in the right direction, and as such it will receive my hearty support. I do not wish, of course, to go into details on the Second Reading of this Bill, but I wish to mention one or two points which I think are worthy of consideration. In the first place I think the right hon. Gentleman might have taken a stronger line with respect to the twelve scheduled items. The House will know most of them. I venture to say that of these twelve items in the schedule, there is scarcely one—and I think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will agree with me—which ought not to be considered non-controversial. They are of such a kind as, looking to the course of the various debates, the evidence before the Commission, and the Report of the Commission, must be placed in the category of railway reforms the necessity of which has been absolutely proved; indeed some of these, such as brake levers, labelling wagons, and so on, the railway companies at their annual meetings and through the railway papers have said, over and over again, are matters

which ought to be put into operation, and they raise no objection to them. But the clause contains these words, "that the Board of Trade may make such arrangements." I should very much prefer, of course, the word "shall," and I think there is a claim for this provision because automatic couplings and other things which might be mentioned are undoubtedly at the present stage not in the non-controversial category, and therefore the making of them compulsory would find, I know, some considerable resistance in this House, but surely the matters about which we are all agreed might have been secured by a compulsory clause and not one which leaves it entirely to the Board of Trade. Indeed, I would say as to the general principle of this Bill, that the Bill is precisely what the President of the Board of Trade will make it. With a bad President and a lax Department this Bill is not worth the paper it is printed on, but with an active President and a sympathetic Department you could do almost anything with this Bill. It may be said that we never have bad Presidents or a lax Department. That is a matter of opinion, but I should like to have a safeguard against what may happen. The President of the Board of Trade would have been well advised with respect to those things about which we are all agreed if he had made them absolutely compulsory. I have never in this House attempted to be arbitrary or reckless in dealing with the manipulation of railway traffic. Anyone who thinks that the complicated mechanism of railways can be made subject to the whims and caprices of even the most eminent Members of this House does not know anything about it. So far as a reasonable time limit is concerned, I, for one, should not be an opponent at all, because I realise the delicacy and difficulty of dealing with this question. I see, I think, another defect in the Bill. These rules require to be applied to each company in the kingdom. Here, again, I think that there are certain precautions that are admittedly necessary, and not only that, but are admittedly practicable and easy to put in operation with practically no cost and with very little time. I think that having once ascertained what these are, they ought to be put in operation on the North Eastern, the North Western, the Cambrian, and all other railways. On the contrary, there may be, I do not say that there are, certain companies that will require more pressure than other companies, sometimes rightly, and at other times wrongly. I think the class of rules to which I have referred should be of universal application. I am a little afraid of Clause 4. It says—

"The Board of Trade, in considering any objection to a draft rule, and the Commissioners in considering any objection referred to them, shall, amongst other matters, have regard to the question whether the requirements of the rule would materially interfere with the trade of the country, or with the necessary operations of any railway company."

If that is just a pious concession to the railway companies I do not mind, but I cannot conceive of any great reform which would not be endangered by it. The small items I have referred to would not be touched by this clause, and that is why I want them placed in the same category. But how can you introduce any great change in railway appliances without interfering with the trade of the country, or with the necessary operations of any railway company? There is such a thing as a continuous brake. The Board of Trade do not say to the railway company, "You must equip your stock with a particular brake." The Department says it must be equipped with a continuous brake which conforms to certain conditions which are laid down by the statute, and positively there is no danger of this idea of running some patent to death. I do not see why this clause should make any improvement subject to interference with traffic, because there are only one or two ways it can interfere. If it interferes in the sense that there are little difficulties in the transition period, I can understand it. The experience of America with respect to their automatic coupler was simply this: They passed a law that said, "In five years all your stock must be equipped with automatic couplings." They eventually extended the limit to two more years. At the end of these five years 30 per cent. of the stock in America was still being coupled by the old-fashioned method, and the railway men had to contend now with the automatic coupler and now with the hand coupler. In the first year or two of that dangerous work a very large number of lives were lost. But under this clause a railway company might point out to the President

of the Board of Trade, "If you introduce automatic couplers it will cause the men greater danger and interfere with our traffic," and therefore I cannot think that these words are necessary. Of course, another method of interference would be to force on a railway company some appliance which would positively prevent them working their traffic. If that was pointed out and shown to be the case it would end the whole business with that particular appliance. Therefore, I do think there was no need for these words. I have only to say one word about the Railway and Canal Commission. I agree with the hon. Member for Preston in regard to that matter. I do not think the Railway and Canal Commission is an ideal body to be the court of appeal in a matter of this sort. In fact, I should rather have thought that they were about the worst body that could have been selected for the purpose. The right hon. Gentleman may have other reasons which he will give us why this body was selected, but I certainly think we ought to be able to get together a small tribunal which would possess qualifications. I submit that in trying those appeals nobody except those possessing highly technical qualifications, it might be with the legal element in it, would be able to deal fairly with these questions. It is a question of fact, it is not a question of opinion. There will be allegations that appliances cannot be worked, and that they can be worked. It is not long legal arguments that are required, but practical knowledge of railway work that can alone decide these matters, and I say that in the interest equally of the public and the men. I want to say in conclusion that I rejoice in the great work of my respected predecessor in the seat I so unworthily fill as compared with him—Mr. Mundella. This Bill has been made far more easy by the fact that he was the first British Minister who sent into the shunting yards and other places of this country two practical railwaymen. They have been able to get into the nooks and corners of railway work. Before then we had most elaborate inquiries into the cause of loss of life to passengers, but you killed your railway men, and all that was recorded of them was some paragraph in a local paper which related the horrible fact. Now you have two men inquiring into accidents to railway men. When you do put practical men face to face with these great industrial dangers, I venture to say that not only this House but the country will respond readily and enthusiastically to the demand which is now being made on the railway companies by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and I can assure him that there is a wide field that even his Bill has not covered. I believe that in all legislation of this character you should put human life before everything else; and, secondly, you should remember that railways are complicated pieces of mechanism. If these things are borne in mind then great results will follow.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I desire to join in the congratulations to the Government for the introduction of this Bill. Of those congratulations I think the President of the Board of Trade in particular deserves the greater share, for the position in which he has been placed is one of extraordinary difficulty. In regard to the remarks made by the hon. Member for the Brightside Division, it appears to me that they contain a certain amount of contradiction. In one part of his speech he expressed a certain amount of enthusiasm in favour of the measure, and then he pointed out that the whole operation of the Bill will rest with the Board of Trade. I wish to say a word or two of reassurance to the hon. Member upon this point. Speaking from a considerable amount of experience upon this question, I believe I am right in expecting that this Bill, if passed into law, would be the basis of very energetic action on the part of the Board of Trade and the new staff which, under the authority of the Bill, would be set up. I think the most important speech which has been delivered so far is the speech of the hon. Baronet the Chairman of the North Eastern Railway Company. The hon. Baronet stated that he and those associated with him would support this Bill, and I think that assertion does more to support the action of the Government than any other statement which could be made in this House. I should like to associate myself with the words of congratulation used by my hon. friend the Member for Leamington upon the conduct of the Government in regard to this question of the safety of railway servants. The position in which the

right hon. Gentleman has been placed is an extremely difficult one. Last year the Government introduced a Bill for the purpose of securing greater safety to railway servants, and that measure met with a large amount of opposition both inside and outside of this House. The result was that a Royal Commission of an exceedingly representative character was appointed. That Royal Commission has set an example, for it has altered the whole character of the public estimation of Royal Commissions, which are usually regarded as a means of postponing a question. This Royal Commission set to work with remarkable and, I venture to say, with unprecedented energy. It took evidence of exactly the character required, and it has presented a Report which is the basis of the Bill now before the House, and I venture to think that there is nothing in the Bill which is outside the strict limits of that Report. I think the Government are resting upon a solid foundation when they bring in a Bill identical with the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The number of casualties to railway men, upon which such stress has been laid is, to my mind, even less appalling than the regularity with which these casualties year by year occur, and the remarkable way in which they have increased of late years. There are 500 men killed every year, and 12,000 either maimed or injured every year on our railways. That is the story of all the Board of Trade Returns, and this slaughter has gone on year by year with scarcely any public attention being drawn to it. The Railway Servants' Society have sought to draw public attention to the matter; but until my right hon. friend, impressed with the importance of this question and with the humanitarian issues which surround it, entered into the question by his Bill of last session, I believe that scarcely any attention had been given to the subject. To do the shareholders and railway directors—who are well represented in this House—justice, I do not believe a single one of them would desire an increase of dividend or any economy of expense at the cost of a single life which could by any possible means be saved. A large number of these accidents have now been proved to be avoidable, and of that there is no doubt whatever. I venture to say that no financial loss to the railway companies will follow the operation of this Bill. I shall be able to show during the short time I shall detain the House that there is a counter column to the account, and that there is a saving to be expected from the adoption of some of the provisions of this Bill, which I hope will be insisted upon by the President of the Board of Trade. So long as this House and the public thoroughly understand the effect of the Report of the Royal Commission, which clearly asserts that there is a possibility of saving life, then I am sure that it will be impossible, notwithstanding any detailed objection which may be made to the Bill, to avoid the passing of this measure practically in its present form. Allusion has been made by the hon. Member for Brightside to the system in use in America. I was much struck with the words in the Report of the Royal Commission upon this question, which quotes a passage from the Message to Congress in the year 1889, sent by the President of the United States, in which he says—

"It is a reproach to our civilisation that any class of American workmen should, in the pursuit of a necessary and useful vocation, be subjected to a peril of life and limb as great as that of a soldier in time of war."

Dealing with the avoidability of certain accidents, the Report of the Royal Commission uses these pregnant words—

"Having carefully considered the facts and figures above set out, we have come to the conclusion that the deaths occurring and the injuries sustained amongst railway servants are unnecessarily great in number, and can, by means of authoritative action, be diminished. If we are right in this conclusion we feel sure that every class of your Majesty's subjects will desire to see full and immediate action taken to diminish the preventible loss of life and injuries sustained by a deserving portion of the community."

Until quite recently all this loss of life and limb fell upon the workmen, without any assistance except that afforded by insurance funds provided by the railway companies. It is true that by a recent enactment of this House compensation is given to the survivors of the men who lose their lives in the course of their employment upon railways. But the very purpose of this Bill is that prevention is better than cure, and the prevention of all avoidable accidents, as stated by the Royal Commission, is the object which is sought by this Bill, and it is an object which I venture to say this House un-

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doubtedly desires to see carried out. The reasonableness of the Bill is based upon the fact that it is an extension of an existing system of inspection of railways which have never had that system of inspection extended to them before. The Board of Trade has had the power for many years of inspecting steamships which carry passengers. This power is also possessed by the Home Office in relation to mines and factories. The system that will be inaugurated under this Bill will be identical with the system of inspection which has hitherto been so successfully carried out in regard to steamships, mines, and factories. There is no sufficient reason why that principle should not have been established long ago, and it is a matter for congratulation that it is now being established by this Bill. I believe that the clothing of the Government railway inspectors with increased authority as regards railways which they did not previously possess will work no real hardship to the railway companies, and will gradually reduce the waste of human life. The Board of Trade inspectors hitherto have not had the power of insisting upon the carrying out of these recommendations. I do not doubt that the Board of Trade will proceed cautiously, but nevertheless energetically, in regard to safety appliances. In the system of appeal which is set up by the Bill there is really nothing objectionable. I do not see anything unreasonable in the rules which the Board of Trade may make, for they can only make them after having recommended them to the railway company. There must, no doubt, be some sort of court of appeal, and I cannot see that there is any existing tribunal which is more competent to deal with such appeals as may arise than the Railway and Canal Commissioners. Possibly with more experience it may be found that a new tribunal ought to be established; but taking tribunals as they exist at present, I do not know of any tribunal which would be more competent for the purpose. To do justice to the railway companies I should like to inform the House that upon this question of automatic couplings many railway companies are already voluntarily trying them. The Bill provides that—

"It shall be the duty of every railway company to give all reasonable facilities (subject to the due working of their traffic) for conducting any experiments made by the Board of Trade for the purpose of this Act."

That is an imposition upon the railway companies which I, for one, entirely support. It places upon the railway companies the conducting of experiments at their own cost in regard to adopting the best possible appliances. Automatic couplings have been very successful in America, both from a humanitarian and a commercial point of view, and I know that the North Eastern, the North British, the Great Northern, the Great Central, and the South Eastern Railway Companies—and possibly others—have been making experiments recently with automatic couplings, and I believe their adoption will be ultimately extended. On the Great Northern automatic couplings have been used in a way which has been entirely successfu and satisfactory, although I do not know the name of the particular patent which has been used. I believe that, when the difficulties attending automatic couplings have been overcome, the application of this improvement to our English railways will not only be a material advantage, but it will be found in the long run that there is a substantial counter side to the balance-sheet by the adoption of automatic couplings. The advantages may be divided into three sections. In the first place there will be less compensation for injury, because there will be a fewer number of workmen injured; secondly, there will be greater dispatch in marshalling—and on our large railways the clearance of the line with greater dispatch is of the utmost importance commercially; and, thirdly, there will be a less number of shunters required for doing a given amount of work than are employed at the present time, or else it will be possible to carry on more traffic with the same number of men. These matters, along with many other details mentioned in the schedule, are a fruitful source of accidents. There are the protective warnings to platelayers, the prevention of obstructions in goods yards and sidings, and the maximum hours of labour for men upon whose vigilance the safety of the public depends. I am not sure that the scope of the Bill includes such circumstances as those which were brought to light by the accident on the Great Western Railway on the 27th December last, which formed the subject of a question which I addressed to my right

hon. friend on the 29th March last.* In that case the men had been working for fourteen or fifteen hours, and it was stated that the cause of the accident was the exhaustion of the engine-driver, who had been working for a continuous period of fourteen hours. That is a matter which seriously affects the safety of the travelling public. It not only affects the safety of the railway servants themselves, but there may be a great risk to the lives of hundreds of railway passengers. If the scope of the Bill does not include the regulation of hours in this respect, I hope the matter will receive the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. There is one other point to which I should like to refer. The trail of the financier appears to me to be upon this Bill. I find that one clause of the Bill makes special provision for the control by the Treasury not merely of the amount to be expended under this Act, but also of the number of inspectors who may be appointed by the Board of Trade. It seems to me that if under our constitutional system the Treasury must have the power of controlling the expenditure of public Departments, at least we should eliminate such questions as the limitation of the appointment of the inspectors who will be required by the Board of Trade to carry out this Act of Parliament. The number of inspectors required under this Bill will not be very high, and I think that the Board of Trade may be safely trusted by this House to regulate the number, without giving special power to the Treasury to limit that number and to interfere with the action of the Board of Trade. I desire to support this Bill. After very careful consideration, and with the advantage of some practical knowledge of the questions which underlie this subject, I have no hesitation in saying that I believe this Bill will succeed in achieving the objects for which it is intended. It gives a control never before possessed by the Government in relation to railways, and in comparison with the Bill which was introduced last year it seems to me to be a distinct step in advance from that point of view, and yet the railway companies accept the measure with almost entire satisfaction. If that is not a triumph of statesmanship and even of diplomacy for the Government after what happened a year ago, then I do not know what is. This Bill reconciles the interests of employers and employed, which in this case will prove to be identically the same.

*MR. RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.): We have just listened to a speech delivered by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Leamington Division of Warwickshire, in which he has paid a well-deserved compliment to the railway companies of the United Kingdom for the care and attention which they have bestowed upon the question of saving the life and the limbs of those engaged in their service. I believe myself that there is no class in this House so interested in the saving of life and the avoidance of accidents on railways as those associated with the direction and mangement of the railways of this country. If evidence of that is needed, I think I might point, in the first place, to the ready acquiescence of the railway authorities in regard to the Commission appointed to make inquiry last year into this question. I might point to the fact that not only were there two very distinguished gentlemen associated with railways who sat as members of that Commission, but the railway companies also rendered undoubted service by the evidence which they were glad to have the opportunity of placing before the Commission. The Report showed the great advance which has been made in recent years in regard to the administration of railway matters from the point of view of the avoidance of accidents. On page 7 of the Report the Royal Commission state—

"It is to be observed that, in respect of the operations of railway servants generally, accidents have during late years greatly diminished. Thus the total number of fatal accidents to railway servants was in 1872 three times as great as in 1898."

I take it that that is in itself a sufficient contradiction of the unfortunate statement which has been made by the hon. Member for the Brightside Division. I should like the House to bear with me whilst I place before hon. Members facts which will show that even the language of the Report does not convey to the country and to the Members of this House the real state of the case. I wish to bring to the knowledge of the House figures which will show that during the period which has elapsed between 1872 and 1898 there has been an enormous development

* See page 700 of this Volume.

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of railways going on in this country. In 1892 there were 15,800 miles of railways in this country, but in 1898 we had 22,000. The number of passengers carried in 1872 was 420,000,000, but in 1898 the number was 1,500,000,000. In 1872 180,000,000 tons of goods were carried on the railways, but in 1898 the total was 379,000,000. I might go on quoting such figures, but I will content myself by saying that in 1898 nearly four times as many passengers were carried, twice the quantity of goods and minerals, twice the train mileage, twice the number of engines, three times as many railway carriages were used, and the number of wagons in use was more than double than what it was in 1872. I do not know whether the figures are available or not, but I think it will be found that the number of servants employed by the railways was nearly double in 1898 what it was in 1872, so that the real proportion should have been six to one, if regard is had to the enormous development of the railway system. It cannot be doubted that, in common with merchant shipping, mines, and factories, the work on and about our railways must be classed as a hazardous occupation. Accidents, however, are sometimes due to contributory causes, and while we have no accurate information or statistics as to the number of accidents which happen to the working classes on the railways due to their own carelessness as compared with the accidents which occur through no fault of the workmen, I think there are some important figures in the possession of the House with regard to another class of accidents. In 1898, in accidents to railway passengers, there were twenty-nine fatalities due to the railway companies, while 128 passengers were killed owing to some action of carelessness on their own part, showing a proportion of rather more than four to one. When it is remembered that this great railway work is carried on night and day, at great speed, for long distances, one must feel how difficult it must be to exclude danger altogether, but all will agree that it is desirable to minimise it in every possible way. This House itself, in the Bill which it passed in 1897 dealing with workmen's compensation, went a long way, if anything were necessary, to spur the railway companies to greater exertions than they were previously making to ensure the safety of life and limb of those in their employ. The hon. Member for Battersea sometimes contends that where insurance takes place there is no greater inducement in that direction under the Workmen's Compensation Act than before. That cannot be said in the case of railways. Railway companies are far too large and important bodies to be able to insure themselves against the additional responsibility which the Legislature casts upon them by the Act of 1897. Therefore this House, by the passing of that Act, by the obligations thereby placed upon the great railway corporations of the country, has done a great deal to make those companies, even solely upon the ground of economy, consider, perhaps more carefully than they did before, the question of the safety of their employees. The Bill now under consideration is the outcome of the labours of the Royal Commission. I should like to call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to a few points in which this measure seems to go even beyond the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I do not offer these remarks in any critical or unfriendly spirit. I am quite sure that the Board of Trade have in the past heartily co-operated with the railway companies in endeavouring to do everything possible to minimise the risk of accidents; but everybody associated in the management of railway companies in this country feels that it is eminently undesirable that a feeling should grow up on the part of those responsible for the management of railways that there is any divided responsibility in regard to the administration. But in whatever degree you put additional and new power in the hands of the Board of Trade or their officials, in such degree you take away from railway managers that responsibility which ought solely to rest upon them. The result of Clause 1, it seems to me, will be to enable the Board of Trade to make rules not only with regard to the specific subjects named in the schedule, but under Sub-section 2 a general power is given to make rules where the Board of Trade consider that avoidable danger to persons employed on any railway arises from any operation of railway service. That seems to me to be a very wide power, and one capable, if it were put into execution in a drastic manner, of going beyond the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Sub-section 3 of the same clause goes even further. Under it the Board of Trade may by rule require

amongst other matters the use or disuse of any plant or appliances. This seems to those with whom I am associated in railway working to be a tremendously large order. It is so inclusive that there is nothing connected with railway work which may not come within the language of that sub-section. In fact, the sub-section stands apart from the second sub-section, and seems to imply that it goes beyond that sub-section, and therefore it gives the Board of Trade much wider powers than those recommended by the Royal Commission. I should be glad to hear from my right hon. friend that it is not the intention of the Government that that sub-section should have that effect, and to have an assurance that Sub-sections 2 and 3 are intended to be directed to the same object, and that it may be found possible in Committee to unite the two sub-sections so that there may be no dividing whatever on that point. With regard to the general power, I would remind the House that the trend of present-day legislation is all in favour of laying down specifically in a Bill the matters which are to be dealt with by the Board of Trade under it. Under the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, Clause 1 provided that orders may be made for any of the following things; and then there were specifically laid down the adoption of the block system, interlocking of points, continuous brakes on passenger trains. That was a definite and clear instruction, and there could be no misconception as to what the powers of the Board of Trade were. But the language of this present Bill is so very general in its character that it might be taken to mean all or anything, and the effect will be to reduce the feeling of responsibility and the desire to initiate reforms in regard to railway administration on the part of officials who ought to be responsible for them. It is doubtful whether it is desirable in the interests of good administration that such wide and general powers should be given. If new powers are to be given, they should be restricted to special branches of work, especially to those mentioned in the Report of the Royal Commission, and which are in the schedule to this Bill. Last year's Bill provided that orders in respect of automatic couplings should not be brought into effect for five years, and in regard to other points in the Bill it was proposed that a limit of two years should be fixed. The Bill now under consideration proposes no limit of that kind, and I would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman that when the Bill is considered in Committee there are certain points in connection with which some such limit should be inserted in the measure. The important question of automatic couplings come within that category. No general rules on the subject should be issued until a Report has been received from the Committee to which reference has been made, and a certain time should be allowed to the railway companies to make the change asked for. There was one other point dealt with in the Report of the Royal Commission to which I should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, the question of solid-buffer wagons. On this point also the Report of the Commission goes hardly so far as the provisions of the Bill before us. The statement of the Commission on page 14 of the Report is to this effect—

"The consequence is that the number of dead-buffer wagons in use is yearly diminishing. The ordinary life of these wagons is stated to be from sixteen to twenty years, and as no new ones have been built for nearly eleven years the dead-buffer wagons would apparently all cease to be of service at periods varying from five to nine years."

The Report then goes on to recommend that ten years would be a fair and just limit of time to impose. Since I saw that Report I have made special inquiries upon this subject, and I find that, taking two large railways in Scotland, the North British and the Caledonian, the Report does not tally with the facts. Each of these companies has about 65,000 of mineral wagons upon its system, 58 per cent. of which are solid-buffer and 42 per cent. spring-buffer wagons. On the Caledonian Railway system, since 1889, 9,221 solid-buffer wagons have been put on. The first mineral wagon with spring buffers was put on in 1894, and of course all wagons building on that system at the present time are spring-buffer wagons. In addition to this number, which will show how large a proportion of solid-buffer wagons are still in use, about 20,000 traders' wagons are to be found on the Caledonian system alone, of which number only 3 per cent. are spring-buffer wagons. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division referred to the schedule, and to the practical unanimity

in regard to the matters dealt with therein. I agree that on most points there is unanimity, but there are three points out of the twelve to which I should like to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. Grave doubt is felt by those who are most experienced in railway administration as to the rule for a "look out" in connection with permanent way men. They prefer that the responsibility of the man in charge of the gang should not be diminished, but if there was a mechanical contrivance by which it was possible to warn the men it would be desirable as an aid. Another question is in regard to fouling points. Notwithstanding the evidence given before the Royal Commission, perhaps to some extent as the outcome of that evidence, there is a very general feeling in regard to the question of fouling points that you may possibly render the work more dangerous by the operation of new rules in regard to the marking of fouling points. At present one man is responsible for the operation of shunting, but if a divided responsibility were set up under any rules in connection with fouling points in the shunting yards, great doubt exists as to whether more accidents might not occur. Another point is the working of trains on running lines without brake-vans. The language of the Report of the Commission is perfectly clear, because it contains the words "beyond the limits of the station," but the words are omitted from this schedule. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to insert that limitation, because otherwise great inconvenience will be caused to the working of the railway system in many parts of the country. One other point is that there seems to be in the Bill no power to rescind rules. The Factories and Workshops Act, 1891, provides specifically for the varying or the rescinding of an order. There is no such provision in this Bill; perhaps it has been overlooked. One part of the Bill deals with the question of the power to issue a specific order should the Board of Trade regard that as more likely to meet the necessities of the case than a general order. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to consider to what extent he can tell us the effect of a specific order in regard to any particular matter dealt with by the Board of Trade, and how far it would be possible for such an order to involve the acquisition of land. It must be perfectly clear to the House that where a specific order is made in regard to some particular matter which has been the subject of a Report to the Board of Trade, that specific order might involve the acquisition of land. I think it ought to be clear that the railway companies are not to be asked to do anything other than that which they have actual powers to do. One clause in the Bill deals with the subject of capital to be raised where necessary for the purpose of paying the expense of works in which the railway companies may be involved by the operation of this measure. That is important, because it shows that the Board of Trade contemplate the possibility of works being carried out of such a large character that they may involve a very considerable expenditure. On this point I should like to ask whether, having regard to the fact that railway companies are now working at very much greater expense than formerly—in 1872 the working expenses were 48 per cent. of the gross receipts, while in 1899 they had grown to 58 per cent., or an increase of about 20 per cent.—and that many of these works which might be ordered by the Board of Trade might involve expenditure not only out of capital but also out of revenue, the right hon. Gentleman will give us an assurance that sympathetic consideration will be given to an application, if made, to readjust the rates within the maximum rates the companies are entitled to charge, and that such additions should not be subject to Section 1 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1894. The coupling and uncoupling of wagons has been dealt with, but I should like to ask what the precise meaning of Clause 13 is. Is it intended that Clause 13 should give the Board of Trade power to carry out experiments in regard to every conceivable subject connected with the railway system of the country? The clause provides that the Board of Trade may hold "such inquiries and make such experiments as they think expedient for that purpose," the purpose being that stated in Clause 1. Is that really the intention of this Bill? Is it not intended that these experiments should be limited to automatic or non-automatic couplings? On this point, I should like to ask whether the liability in respect of accidents which may arise in the carrying out of these experiments

will also be borne by the Board of Trade and not thrown on the shoulders of the railway companies. I attach special importance to the question of time being allowed after the carrying out of the experiments for the companies efficiently to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission. I hope the President of the Board of Trade will find it possible to satisfy us on some of the points I have raised, and that when this Bill is passed it will fulfil the highest expectations of the Government and its friendly critics, and that many lives may be saved and many injuries prevented. I cannot say this without paying a deserved tribute to the splendid staffs of the railway companies; they are a noble body of men, doing their work in a splendid way, and I am sure they are appreciated not only by the companies which employ them, but also by the public whom they serve. I hope it will be found possible to make clear what precise railway operations are to be brought within the scope of the Bill, and that the danger of divided responsibility will be avoided. I believe it is most desirable that in the future, as in the past, those answerable for the administration and management of the railway lines of the United Kingdom should continue to feel that the safety of the public who travel, and of the servants who work on their system, is to them a matter of the first importance and gravest responsibility.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I feel that the gratifying unanimity in the reception of this Bill and in the tone of the discussion has scarcely been broken by the numerous criticisms of the hon. Member for West Renfrewshire, who has just spoken. Everyone admits the evil; everyone praises the Royal Commission, and I think that the Royal Commission deserve considerable credit for the manner in which they addressed themselves to their work. Everybody feels that the State has now completely established its right to intervene in matters of this kind, and we have scarcely any of the old arguments in favour of the *laisser faire* attitude with which we used to be favoured. I feel, therefore, that in that state of unanimity, and with the Report of the Royal Commission before us, one is really dispensed from dealing with the general aspects of the question as it might otherwise have been necessary to do. The President of the Board of Trade very prudently put representatives of the railway companies and the wagon owners upon this Commission, and as they assented to a unanimous Report, it is hardly possible for the companies now to come forward and use any of the old arguments with which we are so familiar against the intervention of the State in matters of this kind. If it were necessary to justify that intervention, we could find sufficient cause why we should deal with railway more than any other employment in the fact that railway companies enjoy a practical monopoly, that in their own areas they are exempt to a very great extent from all competition, and that the State has given them exceptional privileges, in return for which it may impose exceptional disabilities. The real point with which we have to deal in the Bill before us is as regards the powers to be given to the Board of Trade. I do not see how it would be possible to have any Bill dealing with this subject other than upon the plan proposed in this Bill. We cannot possibly specify the particular kinds of work which are dangerous, the particular extent to which the danger ought to be guarded against, or the particular distance to which even a Government Department may safely go in endeavouring to put pressure upon the railway companies. These things vary from time to time. New inventions may make all the difference, and if you were to specify these matters in an Act you might find that the Act was practically obsolete and inapplicable in a few years. Besides which, it has been the experience of Government Departments, and perhaps to a larger extent of the Board of Trade than of others, that more progress is made by having a flexible pressure, which may be increased in extreme cases, rather than a fixed rule to which everyone must conform. When you lay down a fixed rule you cannot go beyond the actual words of the statute, while, on the other hand, a Government Department, entrusted with such powers, is amenable on the one hand to the legitimate pressure exercised in the House of Commons, and on the other hand to the legitimate resistance of those who manage private industries. I thing everyone's experience of any Government Department is—certainly mine at the Board of Trade was—that one was exposed to an

al amount of pressure from both sides. the one hand, there were constantly stions in the House, and Members my hon. friend the Member for East thamptonshire were constantly making ıands upon the Board of Trade to go y far indeed in the direction of putting ssure on the railway companies; and, the other hand, the railway companies e able to impose a strong and effective sive resistance; and the Board of de had reason to believe that it was ıg fairly well, and acting with subıtial justice when endeavouring to ır an even keel between this opposite ssure from the two sides. I do not ık it is possible to grant this reform in other way than is now proposed, and refore I am inclined to believe that line taken in the Bill of specifying ain subjects as proper matters for eriment, and leaving a margin out those matters into which the Board Trade may like also to go, but at the ıe time subjecting the Board to an eal and requiring it to observe certain ditions and precautions, is, on the ıle, the best, and, indeed, the only ı. One of the criticisms which have n made referred to the Railway Comsioners. The scheme of this Bill is t the Board of Trade is to take the iative, that it may make rules, but that se rules may be objected to by the ıpanies or by the wagon owners, and t there is to be a sort of appeal to the lway Commissioners, in case the railr companies think too much pressure is ıg put upon them. The Railway Comsioners are not an ideal body; they very slow, and I know they e not given perfect satisfaction. the present Bill I am glad to see that appeal need not necessarily be to the ıle of the Commissioners, but that er is given to frame rules under which case can be heard by one Member r. That is a very proper course to e, and I do not think there will be greater difficulty in dealing with ı an appeal than there is in a case ch a judge has to try. A Railway ımissioner has practical knowledge of way affairs, and it is better, instead of ımoning the Commission to debate ıe matters, that they should be given ne man to decide. I am glad to see, that he will have power to call in an ssor. In that way his position be very much like that of an Admiralty judge in his procedure. Something has been said with regard to the obstacles which will be interposed in this matter by the railway companies. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield seems to have a little fear that the Bill is too weak, and that the companies will be able to resist the Board of Trade, and that everything would depend on the person who was President of that Department for the time being. That may be, in a certain sense, true of all Departments, but it must not be forgotten that the Board of Trade is very amenable to pressure in this House The friends of the working men in this House are not at all slow to put on that pressure, and recent experience has shown that the House is not at all irresponsive to their claims. If the working men, through their representatives, choose to put on that pressure, I do not believe that any Government Department could long withstand it. I am glad to acknowledge that the railway companies have shown a very fair and reasonable desire to respond to the representations of the Board of Trade, but they are certainly slow, and want a little pressure. Anyone who is at all familiar with the railway system of the United States must be greatly struck by the extraordinary dilatoriness of the English companies in comparison with the American companies in introducing improvements both as regards the saving of life and the manipulation of traffic. Take the matter of automatic couplings. There can be no doubt whatever that the American railroad companies have been improving faster in this matter than we have in this country. Upon this subject I refer the hon. Members who questioned my statement to the report of Mr. Hopwood, which was laid before the House last session. There are some departments in which the waste of life on railways is greater than others, but in this particular case of automatic couplings America has been in advance of us. I am not saying this to the discredit of English companies, but I am going to give an explanation of it. It is said, in regard to this question of automatic couplings, that the American car, with its bogie wheels and its greater length, and with the less acute curves of the American railroads, is more convenient to its adoption than the railway system of this country. That may be, but if that is so, why do we not in this country

adopt a better system of cars? I believe that longer cars, with bogie wheel arrangements, would really not only effect an economy in themselves, but would lead to that better system of automatic couplings which has resulted in so great a diminution of loss of life on the American railroads. The American companies have shown us the way in a great many points, and I am quite certain that if the English companies realised how much the American companies are in advance of them in many ways they would take far more pains than they do to obtain American experience and to imitate American example. They have shown us the way by the speed with which they have introduced improvements, though we have not yet copied them. They carry their goods at a greater speed, which, of course, may be due to the fact that there is greater competition, or it may be owing to the difference in the system of management. In this country we have a chairman, a general manager, and a traffic manager, but in America these positions are to a great extent merged into one, under what is called a president of the railway, who is more autocratic, and who carries out these experiments in a bolder way than is possible under the more timorous method adopted in this country. It is quite clear that automatic couplings are covered by Sub-section 3 of Section 1 of this Bill, and the hon. Member for West Renfrewshire must not think that the sub-section by which they are covered goes too far. He will see that the sub-section contemplates all that was said in the Report of the Commission. It was clearly contemplated that all work of shunting carriages should come within the scope of the work to be done by the Board of Trade. Therefore the President of the Board of Trade could not give way, but if he did I hope the House would refuse to allow this necessary and valuable provision to be struck out of the Bill. Now there is a point with regard to private sidings, both as to the rolling stock on the sidings and the arrangement of the sidings themselves. These are now exempted from the operation of the Bill, which does not take into account sidings attached to collieries, brickfields, or the like. This problem has two sides. In the first place, as regards the rolling stock used on private sidings, that which is of the same gauge as the railroad and is used upon the railroad is clearly within the purview of the Bill, because it will be carried on the railroad and must submit to the general provisions of the Bill, and all such stock used on those sidings must conform to the orders of the Board of Trade. But, where the sidings are so gauged that the stock used upon them will not run on the railroad, the rolling stock will not be touched by the Bill. That in my opinion is a serious omission, because, although I believe there are fewer accidents in proportion to the number of people employed on these private sidings than upon those of the railway companies, it is undoubtedly the fact that there are some accidents. There are enough accidents to make it necessary to have some regard to these particular sidings; my impression is that the Home Office has never dealt with these sidings; but this Bill gives the Home Secretary an opportunity of doing so. Whether he should deal with them or the President of the Board of Trade should do so is a matter between the two Departments; but it is quite clear that the matter is one which should come under the purview of this Bill, and the sooner the matter is settled the better, and I hope the opportunity will be taken of including them either in this Bill or in the Factories Bill of the Home Secretary which is at present before the House. On the general question, I do not know that there is anything I wish to add, except to express my pleasure at the tribute paid by the hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield to Mr. Mundella, to whom I believe this Bill is due. I see no reason to doubt, if the Bill is worked properly by the President of the Board of Trade, but that the railway companies will show the same desire to work with the right hon. Gentleman. I do not think the Bill is seriously open to the criticism of the hon. Member for West Renfrewshire. I think it marks a great advance, and I heartily wish it a speedy progress into law.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): I wish to join in the expression of satisfaction at the manner in which this Bill has been received in all parts of the House. So far as I can see, not a single sentence has been uttered against the Bill itself; all criticism has been directed to details more or less important. I think the attitude which has been adopted

towards the measure by all those concerned was due to the appointment of a Royal Commission in which all parties had confidence to examine into the whole question, which was appointed at the request of the House last year. I am not one of those who find fault with the railway companies and wagon owners who took part last year in opposing the Bill. The Bill was founded on a Departmental inquiry, and I do not know that much complaint could be made against the companies when they said that, however satisfactory it might have been to others, to them at all events it was not an inquiry before an expert tribunal, and they would not be willing for legislation to take place until such an inquiry had been made. I saw nothing unreasonable in that proposal, and I did not think the inquiry which they demanded would lead to less demands being made than were made last year, but, on the contrary, that a full inquiry might lead to legislation of even a more drastic character than the proposals then made, and the result has justified my anticipations. A Commission was appointed which had the confidence of all parties concerned, and the terms of reference embraced were much wider in character than those included in the Bill last year, and the question was whether the railway operations or some of them were of such a nature as to require the House to deal with them. The success of the work of the Commission was largely owing not only to the skill, ability, tact, and businesslike capacity of Lord James, but also to the fact that all parties on it went into the matter with a desire to bring it to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion. The representatives of the companies on the Commission, Sir Charles Scotter and Sir James Paget, have done a great public service in the work they performed, in the way they discussed the subject which came before them. The result has been eminently satisfactory. Not only have the Commissioners brought their labours to a speedy conclusion, but their recommendations were unanimous; and when we are asked why we have introduced *this* provision into the Bill and omitted *that*, my answer is that the Bill is founded upon the unanimous recommendations of the Commissioners, and the Government have no desire to go beyond them or fall short of them. From the point of view of the railway servants I do not doubt that this Bill is more satisfactory than the Bill of last year. On the other hand, from the point of view of the companies, although a much more comprehensive measure, it is made more acceptable by the appeal which is given to the Railway Commissioners, which would safeguard them against what they may consider to be oppressive action by the Board of Trade. So I do not doubt but that the Bill, although it is of a more comprehensive character than the one introduced last year, is more satisfactory to all parties concerned. The framework of the Bill is the framework of the Royal Commission. I have been asked why only twelve points were dealt with in the schedule, and why we have not added to it. The reason is that Mr. Harrison, the general manager of the London and North Western Company, on behalf of the Railway Association, expressed his agreement before the Commission with every one of these twelve points, and they were adopted by the Commission, and we therefore thought we were justified in adhering to them. Objection has been taken to the Sub-section 3 of Clause 1, which provides that the Board of Trade may make rules requiring, amongst other matters, the use or disuse of appliances. Even if the schedule were added to, general power of this sort would still be necessary, and to omit that clause would so enormously damage the Bill that I doubt whether it would be worth having. It is wanted for two purposes—for the purpose of carrying out the obligations of the railway companies, and there are many cases where it may be necessary where certain rules should be made; but its main object is to secure that, where it is possible to obtain a coupling capable of application without requiring servants to go between the wagons, the Board of Trade should have power to make rules upon the subject. Much has been said about automatic couplings, but I never attempted to force any particular coupling on the railway companies; nor has anybody at the Board of Trade. Mr. Hopwood has been accused of strongly recommending a particular coupling, but he has never done so. Many couplings—not necessarily automatic—may be applied without the servant going between the wagons, and I am told that it is not at all unlikely that a coupling of that kind would be brought before the companies

and accepted by them. The great object is to secure that the men shall not have to run the risk of going between the wagons, and any coupling, automatic or otherwise, which will secure that ought to be adopted. It has been said that nothing was said as to the time to be given for the application of rules made by the Board of Trade. Surely no one would imagine that the Board of Trade would be so unwise as to adopt some new device without allowing ample time, and even if they were the Railway Commissioners might be relied upon not to be so foolish. Still, if it is thought that some Amendment to secure this was necessary I shall not object to it. My hon. friend the Member for West Renfrewshire seemed rather afraid that Sub-section 3 of Clause 7 may be interpreted as giving power to the Board of Trade to make rules applying to some operations of the railway companies which are not of a dangerous character. He says that Sub-section 3 is a separate sub-section, and that it is not governed by the words of the previous sub-section. Well, I do not think there can be the least doubt in any lawyer's mind that Sub-section 3 is governed by the general clause. I can assure my hon. friend that the Board of Trade do not intend to interfere in the slightest degree with the railway companies other than in operations of a dangerous character, and if there is any doubt on that point it will be made perfectly clear in the clause when the Bill gets into Committee. My hon. friend also asked one or two questions about certain matters in the schedule, such as the working of trains without brake vans, etc. I have to say that Mr. Harrison, the General Manager of the London and North Western Railway Company, was examined by Sir Charles Scotter on every one of these points, and he assented to every one of them, and saw no difficulty in putting them all into operation. And until doubt is cast upon the evidence given by Mr. Harrison by some equally competent gentleman, I am inclined to adhere to the proposals he made, and to the recommendations in which he concurred. The hon. Gentleman says we have taken no power to rescind orders; but I imagine that we have power to make a new order, and in making a new order we could rescind an old one. My hon. friend also asked whether it was intended to limit to couplings the power of the Board to make experiments. I should be very sorry to have that power so limited. There may be many things connected with dangerous trades on the railways in regard to which the companies would be only too glad if the Board made experiments before attempting to deal with them by order. But every clause of the Bill must be read as referring only to dangerous operations; for the Board of Trade do not propose to make any experiments interfering with the management of lines. It is some years now since I myself became impressed by the awful loss of life and injuries to limb which occurred in connection with operations on railways; and no one who has examined the terrible statistics of killed and injured can doubt that it is a matter which requires the earnest and immediate attention of Parliament. It is not a matter which ought to be the subject of delay. If we are convinced that by any supervision on the part of the State some at least of those lives can be saved, some at least of those injuries can be prevented, an imperative duty is cast upon the shoulders of the House of Commons to endeavour by legislation to secure this additional safety for railway servants. No words of mine can be half as strong, half as powerful, or half as pathetic as some of the language used in the Report of the Royal Commission. It says—

> "Operations carried on by goods-guardsmen, brakesmen, and shunters represent a far more dangerous trade than any trade or process except that of merchant shipping."

And then it goes on to say further—

> "Lives that could be saved are lost, and men are injured unnecessarily."

Well, what a statement that is to make, and how it should make us all feel the responsibility of sparing no effort to put an end to such evils. The Royal Commission agreed to an unanimous Report. The Government have endeavoured to embody that Report in this Bill. We have not consciously added to it, nor have we consciously taken away from it. We should resist any attempt to make the Bill fall below the standard set up by the Report of the Royal Commission, and I believe that our determination to adhere to the recommendations of the Report will be supported in all parts of the House. I believe that if we carry this measure into law, as I feel sure we shall do very shortly, we

shall have done as good a piece of work for the saving of life and the prevention of injuries to a class of servants well deserving of sympathy as the House has done for many a long day. I have been asked whether this Bill is to be taken in Committee of the whole House or in the Standing Committee. I propose that it should be referred to the Standing Committee. I am certain the matters which will have to be discussed will be more quietly and efficiently discussed in the Grand Committee than in Committee of the whole House. I rely upon members who serve upon that Committee to do their utmost to assist the Government in getting through with the Bill speedily, so that the evils which all acknowledge shall not continue one single day longer than we can help.

*MR. TENNANT: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer my question?

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman referred to accidents which happened not on main lines of railway. This Bill only applies to main lines, and not to private sidings. The Royal Commission made no recommendations on the subject of private sidings. But private sidings are under the administration of the Home Office, and no doubt the Home Secretary will consider whether the regulations which Parliament thinks it necessary to apply to main lines ought not to be extended to private sidings.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman even more warmly on his speech than on the Bill, with every clause of which I have the heartiest sympathy. I may offer a special welcome to this Bill, because I am the only Member in this House who has up to now obtained the assent of Parliament to the principle of this Bill, having, in 1886, succeeded in carrying to a Second Reading the Railway Regulation Bill of that year, giving the Board of Trade power to deal with the questions of block-working, interlocking of points and signals, continuous automatic brakes, and other points, as well as the question of couplings—in short with all the questions affecting the safe working of goods-guardsmen, brakesmen, shunters, and other matters. I was very sorry that this Bill could not be proceeded with owing to the dissolution in June of that year, because, as we are all aware, many of the evils to which the President of the Board of Trade has made such touching reference might thus have been prevented many years ago. I will only deal with the broad aspects of the Bill. The criticisms levelled at the Bill point to an undue interference on the part of the Board of Trade and an unnecessary increase in the standard of expenditure which may be imposed on railway companies and the owners of private wagons. What I wish to insist upon is that in assuming this grave responsibility, it seems to me that the Board of Trade is not only rendering good service in preventing accidents and giving protection to railway servants in some of the more dangerous operations which they have to go through, but that —though it may take some time—the ultimate economic effect of the Bill will be beneficial to the railway companies, to the private trader, and to all concerned. A real service which the Board of Trade will be doing will be, through central regulation, to bring about the highest standards and uniformity of working and of appliances. This will tend to stimulate inevitable changes in the character of the rolling stock and appliances used on railways, and which will eventually tend to the immense economic advantage of the railway system. Anyone who has gone into the conditions of trade, which are facilitated by the larger rolling stock, the immense freight cars used on American railways, and the increased speed attained by their engines, and the great economies in working thus made possible, must know that the step we have taken to-day must have economic results of vital importance to the railway system, as well as in their direct effect on the safety of the workmen. The period during which the changes ordered by the rules of the Board of Trade are to be carried out has been wisely omitted from the Bill. It is obvious that the periods of time must vary for different kinds of changes in the railway system. The only suggestion which I shall make to the right hon. Gentleman, and which I would be inclined to support in Committee, is that

* This Bill was read a second time on 19th May, 1886, and committed to a Select Committee. (See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. ccc v., page 1440.)

words should be introduced in the Bill to assure railway companies and private owners that adequate time will be allowed for carrying out experiments before rules and regulations are issued in regard to couplings. That is not made, as it should be, absolutely clear in the Bill as it stands. I may say that I have a slight preference for the form of the Bill as it was introduced last year. The Bill of last year was precise in its provisions, while the present Bill, though enlarging the powers of the Board still further and widening the scope of the Bill, does leave the Board of Trade more open to pressure. There may be pressure not only from the friends of labour in the House, but also pressure from behind the scenes by railway directors and owners of private wagons, who have already more than once paralysed legislation of this kind when we were hoping the best results from it. I welcome the strong and decisive words of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the third sub-section of Clause 1. He has made it perfectly clear that this Bill would not, in his opinion, be worth proceeding with at all if that portion of it were to be struck out. I sincerely trust that this spirit will govern the whole course of the Bill through its various stages in the House, and that we may also take these words to imply that it will be proceeded with in the same spirit when it reaches the other House. Having taken an active interest in this legislation from the very first moment I entered the House of Commons fourteen years ago, and having myself repeatedly urged the acceptance of these principles and similar provisions again and again in the House, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon having so effectively carried out these objects in the present Bill, and in having thus associated his name with so admirable a piece of legislation.

*Mr. PURVIS (Peterborough): As representing a great number of railway men, I trust I may take leave to intervene briefly in this debate, because I took exception, in terms as strong as I thought good manners would allow, to the withdrawing of last year's Bill by the President of the Board of Trade; and so I am unwilling to give quite a silent vote in favour of the amends he has made us by his present measure. Last year's Bill came to grief because some considered that it had not been shown to be desirable; others that it was not attainable; and others, again, that it was not necessary. But now things have taken a turn, for the Royal Commission has shown that the Bill is very desirable. It reports that the deaths of shunters have risen in number from 3·6 in a 1,000 in the year 1895 to 5·08 in 1898; and that 78 shunters in every 1,000 are injured. In the next place the Commission finds that the object of the Bill is attainable, for it reports what is even worse than the deaths and the injuries. It reports what is a grave indictment, that these deaths and injuries are more than need be, and can be diminished. And as to the Bill being necessary, the mere statement of all this at least carries with it proof enough that legislation is necessary to make the companies and other owners do what is needed to diminish the number of these deaths and injuries; first, because effect cannot be given to the recommendations of the Commission except by concert among the companies and owners, which concert, again, cannot be effectual unless it receives validity and sanction from the law; for be the general public persuasion as prevalent as it may in favour of the proposed changes, yet it is not the special interest of any one company or owner to set the example. What is everybody's business is nobody's business, and, consequently, in most cases it will be ill done, and in many cases not done at all. And I will go further. Even if there were universal agreement among the companies, still it would need to be enforced by universal feeling among them, equal in compelling strength and rigour to the compelling strength and rigour of the law. But this is virtually impossible, because, amongst other things, one company or owner would feel the expense more than another. So much for the necessity for the Bill. How about the manner in which it deals with the subject matter? The Report of the Commission declares that time is needed to do all that is required, but also declares that a beginning should be made at once. I agree. Ancient wisdom lays it down that the beginning is half of the whole, and this Bill makes the beginning. Now, there are two ways in which to make the companies and wagon owners move in the desired direction. One is an enactment in detail dictating everything to everybody. This was the method of

last year's Bill—after two years brakes and labels; after five years couplings and so forth. It seemed to many to stretch them one and all on a Procrustean bed, pulling out one company longer and lopping another company shorter, forcing them into uniformity by violent means, whether the arrangement should fit or not fit all railways alike. The Commissioners themselves failed to fix on any particular coupling. Not even any witness examined was able to do so, and that is the strongest of the reasons against a measure like last year's Bill, which enjoined couplings after five years, though what couplings will suit is even yet undecided. But by the same token, as they were apparently agreed on the expediency of adopting the twelve improvements mentioned in the schedule to this Bill, I am not sure these ought not to be made compulsory, which, however, is a Committee matter. Well, at any rate, the Commissioners deprecated the antecedent rule of thumb system, and favoured what does seem, on the whole, a more excellent way—dealing, if need be, with each particular railway or class of railway in the particular way required in that particular case or class, and this is the method of the present Bill. The Bill gives power to the Board of Trade to make and enforce rules for reducing or removing the risks to shunters or other railway men—these rules to apply, or not to apply, to any particular railway or class of railways, or, if that should fail to put the saddle on the right horse, then by Section 8 the Board of Trade may give direct specific order to use or disuse any appliance, and so effect the object of the Bill, on pain of penalty for disobedience, and by injunction to compel future obedience. Now, as it would be a violation of elementary justice to exact unwilling submission to all this by anyone without his being heard, so there is in this Bill what was not in that of last year—there is the right of appeal from Festus unto Cæsar, from the Board of Trade to the Railway Commissioners, or to a referee, so that if anyone concerned is not satisfied, and if the Commissioners or the referee find the objection is reasonable, then the objection shall prevail, and the rule or the order shall not be made. Finally, by no means the least popular and important is the provision, which was not in last year's Bill, as to railway sidings connected with a railway, though belonging not to the railway company, but to colliery or other wagon owners. Accidents happen to railway men on these private sidings, and no notice of them is given to the Board of Trade. The wagon owners do not report, because the victims are not their servants, and the railway company do not report because the accident did not occur on their line. Well, the Bill requires the railway company to give notice just as if the accident was on their line. In short, the Bill has the same object as that of last year; but it is more practical and just, more far-reaching and immediate in its action, than that ill-fated attempt, and tens of thousands of railway men who, after long and weary expectation, were last year deeply disappointed, will now rejoice in a measure which goes no little way to realise their highest hopes.

MR. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead): I do not think that Clause 12 ought to pass through this House without amendment. It is one of the most important clauses in the Bill, as it provides that by the simple fiat of the Board of Trade a railway company may break its contract with its creditors, and put new creditors in priority of old creditors. That implies a distinct breach of contract with the debenture holders, and it ought not to be passed without considerable investigation.

MR. RITCHIE: It has already been safeguarded.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the point raised by the hon. Gentleman with regard to Clause 12 was capable of a proper and satisfactory interpretation by the Grand Committee on Trade. He should not deal with it, because it was a purely financial question, and that being so it would be dealt with by somebody better acquainted with that subject than himself. But representing, as he did, the largest railway constituency of the kingdom, it was only proper that he should say a few words upon the Bill. It was not for the first time that the President of the Board of Trade had backed a good cause in a strong and sympathetic speech, and he believed that at the end of the session the Board of Trade would have the credit of passing, perhaps, the best Bill the Government had introduced

this year. If the Bill only effected a tithe of that which some of them expected of it, the right hon. Gentleman would have added another to the many reasons which various sections of labour had for blessing his occupancy of the office he held. He desired to associate himself with all the kind praise which had been given to the Royal Commission, the Report of which had produced the Bill. Not for the first time Lord James had identified himself with industrial reforms, and in doing so had conferred a great boon upon the working classes of the country. He, however, wished to say a word or two about the railway managers and directors who not only gave evidence, but acted upon the Royal Commission, and he desired to do so rather to help the managers and directors against the action of their shareholders. He noticed that these gentlemen agreed unanimously to the Report of the Royal Commission, and he ventured to say that many of them would have gone much further than they did had it not been for the fear of their shareholders behind them. He believed that many railway managers and directors would be quite ready to introduce reforms upon their systems, with a view to the saving of life and limb, were it not that they were nervous and apprehensive of the action of the shareholders at the annual meeting, and therefore he thought the time had arrived when the House of Commons should support them, and when railway shareholders should be told that in many cases their dividends were only earned by the injury of their workmen, and in many instances their interest was only secured by the avoidable death of men whom they employed. When the House saw this happy agreement of railway managers and directors to improve the condition and safety on the railways, it was their duty to carry the feeling outside the House and tell the shareholders that they must give the managers and directors more power in the direction of this Bill than they had hitherto done. One good feature of the debate was the absence of party politics. It was a happy thing for the country that when questions of the safety of life and limb were before the House all party feeling disappeared. He sincerely trusted that we would never see the ideal condition which the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen seemed to think was necessary for railway management in this country, and that we should not assimilate the autocratic power of the presidents of the American railways. He was in America for five years, and anything more lamentable than the number of avoidable deaths that took place on the American railways it was impossible to conceive. He believed that such horrible slaughter was entirely due to the autocratic power of the presidents of railways, and the British system, with all its faults, was infinitely the better of the two. The Bill, in the opinion of the hon. Member for Barnard Castle, was too general; that was the usual character of every Bill of an experimental nature. It was contended that the Bill might tend to diminish the responsibilities of the railways themselves. He had no such fear. If the Board of Trade had had the arbitrary power possessed by the Home Office with regard to mines and other matters, the railway industry would have been made much safer than it is. The hon. Gentleman also thought that the Bill would deter invention; but, on the contrary, it would have just the opposite effect. Directly the Automatic Couplings Bill was introduced in the previous year, the inventors of automatic couplings sprang up like mushrooms on a damp morning. In his opinion this Bill would considerably stimulate invention. It was not the revolutionary Bill which had been expected by some hon. Members in the previous year. In the twelve reforms mentioned in it there was not one which was likely to put the railway companies to much expense in either money or time. Some other suggestions had been adopted long ago by other industries with very beneficial results, and the one thing which he regretted was that railway workshops had not been brought within the operation of the Factories Act, as they should have been long ago. With regard to railway traffic in general, the Bill indicated that railway traffic was a dangerous trade, or at any rate some portion of it was, such as shunting, platelaying, and the work of goods guards, and so far as those matters were concerned, the Bill was a step in the right direction. It gave the Board of Trade power to issue rules, and he hoped those rules would be strong and rigorously enforced, and, generally speaking, would have the same effect in diminishing accidents to life and limb on some of

Mr. John Burns.

the railways that some of the rules of the Home Office had in other dangerous trades. The President of the Board of Trade ought to be supported in his action to make the companies take reasonable notice. Some companies would take a fortnight's notice and be satisfied, whilst others would take six months and not find that enough. He hoped that in this matter the President of the Board of Trade would be guided by the best companies and not by the worst. The penalties imposed by the Bill were simply ridiculous. The maximum penalty was only £50, and such a penalty was ridiculously small. There was nothing in Section 12 with respect to dead buffer waggons. He did not know whether it was intended to abolish them, but one thing was quite certain, and that was that the President of the Board of Trade ought to put them in the schedule of the Bill with an approximate date for their abolition. If it were provided that they were to be abolished three or four years hence, the best of the companies would comply within a shorter period, and other companies would have to follow. Although this Bill had been blessed so much by every speaker, he did not see the blessed words "automatic couplings." He did not see them in any of the sections, although they might be there. He did not grumble with regard to that, but, not seeing them, he was disappointed. He advised the right hon. Gentleman to exploit the unanimity of approval with which this Bill had been received, in order to bring in some stipulation with regard to the use of automatic couplings as soon as he possibly could. He should like something to be done also towards providing portable electric alarms for the use of platelayers apart from their look-out men, because while in clear and fine weather, when the look-out men could see, they were all very well, in the thick, foggy weather, and in those dull, damp days when the steam from the engines did not lift and they could not see, they were almost as badly off as the platelayers themselves. He noticed also that overhead bridges were not mentioned in the Bill, but these certainly ought to be built at such a height as would enable the railway man to stand upright on the top of the tender, and he asked that in all new bridges that were built more headway should be allowed. It would not entail any further expense on the railway companies than the old plan, and in many cases they were willing to do it, particularly in London. There was another point to which he would like to draw attention. There were many junctions and sidings and point places in a busy railway centre where, if an overhead bridge was not possible, there ought to be a subway from one side to the other, with connecting interval ladders. He would not criticise the Bill further now, because, as a member of the Grand Committee on Trade, he would have his opportunity of doing so later on. Public opinion, and the fear on the part of the railway companies of having to pay heavy damages, had enormously increased the safety of railway passengers, but he could not see that increased safety for the men had been attained. On the London and North-Western Railway, which was in many ways a model railway, of the 50,706 men employed in 1896 15½ per cent. were either killed, permanently disabled, or temporarily disabled for periods from three and a half weeks to four months. The condition of things shown by the statistics on this subject required an absolute power on the part of the Board of Trade, and almost tyrannical regulations, in order that the injury to life and limb might be diminished. At the same time he believed that accidents were sometimes due to carelessness on the part of the men, and he would advise railway men to be more vigilant and thoughtful in going about their work, and to avoid liquor as they would the plague. If this Bill were enforced it would be the beginning of good things for half a million of men upon our railways. He hoped the President of the Board of Trade would follow it up by administration of the best description, and whenever a railway director appealed to him in the future to be gentle to the railway companies let him point to the pæan of praise with which the Bill had been greeted by railway directors and railway shareholders in the course of this debate.

*MR. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I had intended offering to the House a few remarks of a general character upon this Bill had I had the good fortune to attract your attention, Sir, somewhat earlier in the evening, and I felt that I might have justified myself in so doing by the fact

that there are few districts in the country more closely interested in this measure than that which I have the honour to represent. Not only is one of the largest railway works in the country in my division, but there are some hundreds of the men working on the London section of the Great Eastern line resident in the district. I felt, therefore, it was my bounden duty to offer the House one or two considerations upon this matter; but at this late hour I hesitate to occupy the time of the House. But I am bound to mention one or two things, because I am not a member of the Grand Committee on Trade which will be considering this Bill later on. When the Bill was first published I adopted a course which I do not think is very usual. I invited the counsel of the men who are directly interested in the measure. I sought an interview with the platelayers, the shunters, goods guards, and so forth, to whom this Bill particularly applies, and I spent several hours with them in a discussion of the Bill line by line. This I can say, that their approval of the Bill was as cordial as that which has come from hon. Members who have taken part in the debate this evening.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. CALDWELL, Lanark, Mid). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

*MR. GRAY (continuing): I should have contented myself with their expression of approval, and given a silent vote upon the measure but for the fact that they emphasised in their discussions two points which I am bound to bring under the notice of the President of the Board of Trade. There was no shadow of doubt whatever that they looked upon the questions of automatic couplings and dead buffers as the two most important matters. They would have liked to see both those phrases in the schedule, and if I do not have an opportunity at the Grand Committee on Trade I should certainly, when the Bill comes before the House, vote for the insertion of those two phrases in the schedule, if for no other purpose than that of satisfying the men who are directly concerned that it is the intention of the Board of Trade to deal with those subjects. I noticed with very great satisfaction the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that Sub-section 3 of Clause 1 did cover the intention of the Board of Trade to deal with the question of automatic couplings, but while he sees that very clearly, and while any ordinary reader of the Bill would also see it, I am afraid there are a great many men very closely concerned in this matter who fancy that because the words are omitted from the schedule the matter will be left out of the cognisance of the Board of Trade. Then there was the other question of dead buffers to goods wagons. I noticed, but I hope there was no significance in the omission, that the right hon. Gentleman made no reference to that subject whatever.

MR. RITCHIE: I am sorry I did not; but there were a great many different points raised in the discussion on the Bill and I may have omitted to refer to more than one of them. But if it is any satisfaction to my hon. friend, I may say that he need have no apprehension in regard to the question of wagons with dead buffers. That is certainly one of the questions which I think we shall deal with.

*MR. GRAY: Having obtained that statement, I do not regret the two or three minutes I have trespassed upon the time of the House. I am quite sure that had the debate closed without that assurance there would have been very great misapprehension outside as to the attitude of the Board of Trade on this subject. It was one of the questions specifically dealt with by the Commissioners. In almost the closing phrases of their Report they expressed the opinion that this should be one of the subjects included in the operations of the Board of Trade, and I am very glad to find that Sub-section 3 of Clause 1 will deal with that exactly as it will deal with automatic couplings. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he proposed to adhere very strictly to the schedule simply because it was the schedule which had been adopted by the Commissioners and upon which all parties were agreed. I am inclined to think that that is merely a sentimental objection, and that it does not go much beyond sentiment. The Commissioners would have equally agreed that it would be desirable at no distant date to deal with automatic couplings.

MR. RITCHIE: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I did not say,

or I do not remember having said, that I intended to adhere strictly to the schedule in the Bill because it was recommended by the Commissioners. What I said was, if I recollect rightly, that the schedule in the Bill was the schedule agreed to by the Commissioners, and hence its presence in the Bill.

*MR. GRAY: I am very glad to hear that also. It seems to me that I am playing the *rôle* of Socrates with some effect in regard to the two questions to which I have received very satisfactory replies. I gather not only that these two subjects are to be included in the operations of the Board of Trade, but that there is no insuperable objection to the mention of them being included in the schedule of the Bill should the Committee think it wise so to do. There are two other points to which I would invite the attention of the Minister in charge of the Bill. If he has the power to make an order, as he undoubtedly will have under the Bill, I take it that he certainly has the power to amend an order. I believe there is ample justification for the principle that those who have power to make an order have power to make an amending order. But I notice there is nothing in the Bill which will give any of the parties concerned the right to approach the Board of Trade with a view to obtaining amending orders. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give his attention to that before the matter comes up in Committee, because it is one of no little importance. There is a question which has not been referred to in the whole course of this debate, a question to which I attach very considerable importance. I am not sure that I shall be in harmony in this with many who sit on this side of the House. I have always held the view that trade organisations and trade unions can occupy and do play a very important part in dealing with trade questions, and that it is infinitely better for employers to deal with organised labour than with disorganised or unorganised labour. I equally hold that it is easier for a State Department to deal with representatives of an organisation than it is to deal satisfactorily with the individual applications of thousands of men. I have had no little experience of the operations of a great organisation with a State Department, and my experience is simply that the organisation acts as a spring buffer between the Department and the people concerned, and, as the spring buffer is desirable in railway operations, I am inclined to think the organisation is desirable in the dealings between a State Department and individual men. I am, therefore, hopeful that in the various representations which may be made by the men under this Bill, the Board of Trade will be prepared to receive those representations through the men's organisations. There is a phrase in the Bill——

MR. RITCHIE: On their behalf.

*MR. GRAY: Very well. Perhaps I may venture to put another question to the President of the Board of Trade. Does he himself construe those words as covering representations received through trade organisations?

MR. RITCHIE: Certainly.

*MR. GRAY: I am delighted to hear that, because the House will at once realise, whatever attitude they may take towards trades unions, that it is impossible for shunters or platelayers to cope with the skilled representations made by a great railway company. The men themselves would feel that they were placed at a great disadvantage in a contest of that character unless they could have equally skilled advice on their own side. If they can make these representations through their accredited organisations, or their officials, they will feel that they are in safe hands. My experience of such organisations is that frivolous complaints would be stopped by the organisation and never reach the Board of Trade, who would thus be saved a lot of unnecessary trouble and worry, and would get in a concrete form the wishes of the men on the subject. I for one am exceedingly pleased to hear that the representations of the men will be so received, and considered when so made. That, I think, removes any little fear the men might have that their wishes would not be fully considered. The opposition of the railway companies and of the shareholders has been met by the exceedingly ingenious device of allowing them to raise further capital for the express purpose of carrying out these Amendments. I should say that no railway company would dare to plead that it will cost them a very large sum of money to do what is required, because

that would be self-condemnation at once; it would be positive evidence that they had neglected in the past those steps which they ought to have taken for the protection of their men. If there are many of these clauses in the schedule with which companies will have to comply after the Bill is passed, it will show that they have not adopted the precautions without compulsion. I do not think that any railway company is likely to take that course, and therefore the right hon. Gentleman is in the fortunate position of having the consent and approval of all parties. I would respectfully offer the right hon. Gentleman, and the Government which he represents, my warmest appreciation of their effort in this direction. If the function of Parliament be that of protecting the lives and limbs of those who, according to the Commission, lose them unnecessarily, then indeed Parliament is fulfilling its very highest work in carrying a Bill of this character. I endorse the sentiment which has already been expressed that no measure has passed through the House of Commons during this session which will be looked back upon with greater satisfaction than that of which the right hon. Gentleman has charge to-night, and to which the House is now asked to grant a Second Reading.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I rise to join in the chorus of congratulation which has been offered to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade on introducing a Bill which seems to have much more chance of passing than the Bill he introduced last year. I had the honour of seconding an Amendment to the Address last year, and I mentioned then a few minor improvements and reforms which might be made for the regulation of railways in order to prevent loss of life. I am glad to see that most of those suggestions have been carried out—not because they came from me, but because they have been recommended by railway engineers and directors and others who sat on the Royal Commission. Though the Member for Battersea does not seem to have seen the possibility of the question of automatic couplings being included in this Bill, it is quite evident that it is contained there, and with regard to such an enormous step as that, I am sure this House is not accustomed to such wholesale and sweeping reforms. As in the temperance cause, we must try little by little to remove some of the dangers which beset the working man in that direction; so far as railway servants are concerned we must hope to make advance little by little. I am glad to see that in the schedule of the Bill before us a great many of these minor reforms are likely to be carried out. For example, the putting of brake levers on both sides of the wagon. The lack of that safeguard is a very fertile source of loss of life among shunters, as when there is only one lever they very often have to get underneath the wagon, the result being, the driver not knowing there is anyone engaged in that operation, loss of life. The labelling of wagons on both sides is also another great step in the right direction. The better lighting of goods yards is also included in the Bill. I am glad to see that in the schedule, Number 12, mention is made of permanent way scouts. I am afraid our platelayers are somewhat in the position of some of our artillerymen in South Africa; there are no scouts put out to warn them of threatening danger. That the loss of life among shunters is very frequent is borne out by a couple of questions I have recently asked with regard to accidents and loss of life in Manchester. There are one or two clauses of this Bill which seem to meet with the approval of the House as they met with the approval of the great body of railway workers. The question of making the rules has been thoroughly explained, and there is no need for me to go further into that question. But the inspection of railways before an accident takes place is a point upon which all railway men are unanimous, and an operation which they wish to see take place. Prevention is better than cure, but as far as I can see the Board of Trade have no special legal power to interfere in the regulation of railway stations and so on until an accident has occurred. The result of that is that very often on some railways, though many of them are splendidly managed, neglect takes place. Look at the Wimbledon station on the South Western line. An enormous number of trains pass through there every day, almost as many as through Clapham Junction, and yet the luggage is usually carried across the permanent way, because there is no subway. The result is that the loss of life

at that station is astounding. That shows the necessity for inspection. I do not see any reason why there should not be inspectors to travel about, so that their attention might be called either to a dangerous place or to the lack of proper appliances at a station. There ought to be no difficulty in allowing them to report to the Board of Trade upon such circumstances involving danger. There is some suspicion or mistrust in regard to the raising of special funds by the companies which may possibly be placed before the debenture stock of the railway. For my own part I think there is an obligation on the shareholders, and therefore on the railway directors, to protect the lives and limbs of their servants. I beg to say one word in favour of the shareholders. I do not believe that the general British public who are shareholders in railways are anxious to earn large dividends at the expense of the lives of those in their employ. The very great majority of them would prefer to receive a ¼ or ½ or 1 per cent. less dividend than see the lives of the men sacrificed. I know it is often said that these reforms will injure the poor widow who is dependent for her income on these dividends. My experience is that the poor widows are the very last in the world to desire to purchase their own support or happiness at the expense of these men. I do not wish to detain the House further, but I have not infrequently seen heart-rending cases where the breadwinner has gone out in the morning in the prime of life, and been brought home to his household either maimed or dying. I have seen the shock which the widow and children have suffered, and the deterioration of their own health in consequence of that shock, and therefore I am delighted to support a Bill which will in any small way tend to prevent such occurrences, and still more a measure which contains within it the seed of a far greater and wider-reaching improvement in the lives of railway workers.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said everyone was most anxious for the safety of the men employed on railways, and there were many points in the Bill of which he approved, especially the provision for the better lighting of stations and sidings. It was not so much the mechanism in railways which caused the accidents as the want of light, and the drive and hurry on dark days in bad weather. He urged the Minister in charge of the measure to give proper time for the stock of the railway companies to be improved, allowing existing stock to serve its proper time, but requiring the new stock to be provided, in accordance with the system laid down. The Government should, however, be slow in dealing with the question of automatic couplings in view of the expression of the Commission on the subject. The Commission reported that before an automatic coupling was compulsorily employed the fullest practical test and trial should be made in order to ascertain the certainty and completeness of its action. The English lines were different from the lines in other countries, and changes were much more difficult owing to the greater amount of shunting which took place on them. The curves were so small that it was impossible, in some instances, to use automatic couplings upon them. He urged the Government to be very careful how they brought forward any recommendation in regard to the adoption of automatic couplings. On the whole, he was entirely in favour of the Bill introduced by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I am sorry to add one word of alloy to the golden meed of praise which has been given to this Bill, although, in its main object, I am one of its supporters. I desire to remove from the face of the Bill anything which might be conceived to be a blot. I believe there is a blot upon this Bill. In Clause 12 power is given, by an arrangement made between the railway company and the Board of Trade, without consulting the debenture stockholders, to issue debenture stock to meet the expenses incurred by the operation of the Act. Many charities, public institutions, and trust companies have investments in the debenture stock of railways, which is looked upon as one of the highest forms of gilt-edged securities, and anything done by Parliament which would detract from that character would discredit it. But what are we to say if power is given after the issue of such a stock, with the express sanction of the Act of Parliament, by application to the Board of Trade, without the debenture stockholders being heard at all, to procure an order that certain expenditure which the railway company is

called upon to make for the safety of the public or of its servants may be charged on the railway over the heads of the first debenture holders, making their security no longer a first debenture stock but a second charge? Such a thing would be an infraction of that right which recognises the inviolability of contracts once duly made between men or bodies corporate, and it would imperil the credit of one of the best securities in the market. I am aware that there is a precedent which can be quoted. The Regulation of Railways Act of 1889 applied a principle of a similar character, for it did not provide for the debenture stockholders being heard, or for anyone being heard on their behalf. That seems to me to be a very dangerous precedent to follow, and it was only intended to apply to companies which had exhausted their capital powers and which were hardly strong enough to raise funds for the purposes required. There can be no reason for this proposal in the present Bill, and I submit that it is a provision which will be detrimental to the companies themselves. A railway company in possession of its own railway must be assumed to be solvent and capable of incurring any expenditure which it may be called upon to make by the Board of Trade. If it is called upon to provide these appliances it is bound to find the money in some way, but it ought not to be possible to say to the creditors of a company, "You must provide these appliances and subordinate your securities." The company will presumably be solvent, and it has the power of raising money, and it must raise it on the second or the third security. If a railway company is not in possession of its own property the power contained in this Bill is not required. I am quite sure the right hon. Gentleman will be willing to fairly consider any suggestion to remove what I consider to be a blot upon this Bill. We have a Bill before us which contains a large illustration of this principle. It proposes to put all simple contracts in front of and over the heads of the debenture stockholders, and this may tend to the destruction of that great Imperial credit which this country now enjoys in all securities which are under Parliamentary sanction. I am going to make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman. As there has been a precedent once before, I do not object to its being used again, providing there are safeguards. This Bill has got reasonable safeguards to protect companies against any arbitrary order of the Board of Trade without being first heard and without having lodged an objection. This Bill gives them the power to appeal to the Railway Commission. I want to know why, as regards Clause 12, which gives the power to superimpose the charge, these people should not be entitled to the same right to object, and the same right of appeal. That provision is absent from the Bill, and it is conspicuous by its absence. The House is aware of the principle upon which private railway Bills have been based. It is that the debenture stock is generally limited to one-third of the stock belonging to the railway, and that is a very large proportion. These debenture stockholders are numbered by hundreds of millions, and while we are dealing with the lives and limbs of a very large number of very deserving working men, yet, large as they are, they are not larger than the class of widows, children, and other people who are the subjects of trusts holding debenture stock. The suggestion I am going to make is that while this power remains in the Bill the Government should accept an Amendment providing that it shall not be exercised without some kind of notice, and some right to be heard, on the part of the debenture stockholders, whose rights are proposed to be interfered with. That is a principle of equity which has always been administered by all our courts, and which hitherto has always been observed by this House in all its legislation. Before our Grand Committees there are no means for private stockholders to be heard, and the only way for them to be heard would be by appointing a Hybrid Committee with power to hear them. I am not suggesting that, because I do not believe in such Committees, and the best inquiry is a Grand Committee. I submit that principle to the right hon. Gentleman, and I hope he may be able to find some way of putting such a provision into the Bill.

*MR. BUTCHER (York): I have listened with much satisfaction to the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. The general principle involved in this Bill, as I understand it, is one which is

not in dispute. It is the principle that when a trade is found to be dangerous the State has a right to intervene and make regulations for the carrying on of that trade with a view to ensuring the safety of those employed in it. That is a principle which has been successfully applied to the great industries of mining, factories, and to our merchant shipping. Up to the present time it has not been very largely applied to railways, because I take it that the powers which have been conferred by Parliament upon the Board of Trade with reference to the regulation of railways have had for their object the ensuring the safety of the passengers rather than that of the employees of the railways themselves. An attempt is now being made to apply that principle for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the employees, and the question we have got to ask ourselves is, is there any class of work upon railways which may fairly be considered dangerous? The answer to that question is simple, for the figures furnished in the report of the Royal Commission show beyond all question that many branches of the railway industry may be considered as trades of the most highly dangerous character. As regards three classes of railway employees at any rate the figures given by the Royal Commission appear to me to show that the persons engaged in those branches are engaged in a dangerous trade. I allude to goods guards and brakesmen, permanent-way men, and shunters. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division has already given some figures as to the mortality from accidents to shunters, and they seem to me to be very striking. The figures given by the Report of the Commission show that the operation of shunting is one of the most dangerous trades in the country. As regards the number of fatal accidents, I find that the figures given on page 11 of the Report show that the proportion of killed from all causes per thousand employed in the occupation of shunting is 5·08, whereas the highest proportion of deaths per thousand in any of the other dangerous trades—that is, in the merchant shipping service—is only 5·1. Therefore the occupation of shunting appears to be almost as dangerous as that of the merchant service, and more dangerous than most of the other dangerous trades. It is impossible in the face of these facts to arrive at any other conclusion than that there are many branches of the railway service in which the occupation must be regarded as dangerous trades. There is one omission from the Report which I am sorry to notice, and that is the case of the railway porters. The case of railway porters is a very serious one, because I find that amongst them the number of deaths and accidents is very high. The number of railway porters throughout the country in 1898 was about 60,000. The total number of deaths in the year 1898 was 54, while the accidents numbered nearly 3,000. It may be perfectly true that most of them were of a trifling character, but when you find such a large number of accidents in that branch of the railway service, one would like to know more about the causes which led to them, and what suggestions can be made to avoid them in the future. I take it that this is a matter upon which the Board of Trade have power to make regulations, and if they find that these accidents to porters arise from preventible causes, no doubt they will make regulations to meet them. The Commission have arrived at the decision, after considering the figures, that there are certain cases of dangerous employment on railways, and it follows from that that there must be some department of the State appointed to inspect the railways so far as those dangerous occupations are concerned, and to make regulations for avoiding the deaths and accidents resulting from those occupations. The question arises, what department of the State should it be? We have heard it suggested that they should be put under the authority of the Home Secretary. I think the Commission has adopted a wiser course. As regards railways the Board of Trade has already very important statutory duties assigned to it in regard to the inspection of passenger lines and signals, the block system, and continuous brakes; and as we know by a Bill which has recently been passed, it now has the duty of preventing overwork amongst railway servants. It seems to me, therefore, that the Board of Trade should be the part of the State to which these new powers under the Bills should be given rather than to the Home Office. I think the President of the Board of Trade has exercised a wise discretion in following the recommendations

of the Royal Commission. He has followed the line of least resistance, because their recommendations have been assented to by the representatives of labour as well as by the representatives of capital, and therefore I think the right hon. Gentleman has exercised the sound judgment in following the lines suggested by the Royal Commission. It has been argued that if we give too great power to the Board of Trade to make regulations for the working of railways, to a certain extent we diminish the responsibility of the railway companies themselves and their capacity for discharging those responsibilities. The real answer to that seems to me to be that we must trust to the intelligence and the good sense of the Board of Trade and its officials. This Bill provides as a safeguard that the Board of Trade shall not issue any regulations without giving the railway companies concerned an opportunity of making objections and of being heard in their defence. If the Board of Trade do not assent to the objections so made, then there is a further safeguard in the Bill, which consists of an appeal to the Railway Commissioners. I venture to think that with those two safeguards there is little danger that the powers of the Board of Trade will be exercised in an injudicious or oppressive manner. I welcome this Bill most cordially, because it deals with a subject which has been too long neglected. We have had it reported that injuries are occurring daily which might be prevented, and I am very glad to think this House is going to legislate upon that subject. I welcome this Bill as an honest and fair attempt to deal with a matter which is of vast importance to the community at large, and to discharge a duty which we owe to that large body of railway servants throughout the country to whom the public is so deeply indebted.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): My constituents are very much interested in this matter, and I desire to say that they fully appreciate the efforts of the Government in bringing forward this Bill. My hon. friend the Member for Wandsworth has spoken of this measure from a commercial point of view. I think it should be remembered that the safety of life and limb is of even more importance than the sanctity of debentures. It seems to me that a Bill to provide the means of preventing accidents is quite right in providing that the cost of any experiments in that direction shall be put as a first charge upon the business. I think this proposal is fully justified by the circumstances. My hon. friend spoke of the analogy of the Companies Bill, but the analogy seems to me to be rather with the Workmen's Compensation Act, for there is no question of life and limb involved in the former. I have known a good Bill spoiled by safeguards, and the one criticism I have to offer has reference to the appeal to the Railway Commissioners. My experience is that that tribunal is a very cumbrous and a very costly one, and it is consequently the refuge of the rich and the deterrent of the poor. The action of the Department might have been trusted, and if some safeguard had to be found a local tribunal in the shape of the County Court would have been a better one than the Railway Commissioners. An appeal to the latter tribunal means great expense to those who go there, and it is also a very expensive tribunal to the State. My hon. friend the Member for Battersea said that the men should be more careful, and I quite agree with that. I was a member of the Railway Hours Committee which sat in 1892, and which took evidence on this subject, and I was convinced that there are times when, owing to very long hours, the men are not physically or mentally capable of being as careful as they might be. I also agree with what was said with regard to the value of the proviso to hear trade organisations, for by their practical knowledge they not only pave the way to a settlement, but they give an additional security to that settlement being loyally carried out, as experience as a member of the London Conciliation Board has convinced me. I heartily approve of the Bill, and I am very glad that the right hon. Gentleman has introduced it.

MR. RITCHIE: May I make an appeal to the House to allow the debate, which has been altogether in one direction, to come to a conclusion? As hon. Members know, the arrangement for the night has been made for the convenience of the House itself, and in order to prevent a sitting which would otherwise have required to be held on Tuesday. My right hon. friend has informed the House that it is necessary that the motion appointing

the Committee on municipal trading should be disposed of before the holidays, and having regard to the fact that we have obtained permission to sit a little longer, I do hope the House will now conclude the debate on this Bill.

*MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): Notwithstanding that appeal I wish to say a few words, and they will be extremely few. I wish to add my voice to the general chorus of approval which has welcomed this Bill. It is extremely satisfactory to hear that it is the intention of the Government to grant facilities for further proceeding with this measure, but I think attention must be called to two points. In the first place we have heard many rumours recently as to the probability of an early General Election. It is very desirable that the Government should not only grant facilities with regard to this Bill, but they should grant those facilities so early that there will be no danger of the measure being lost in the event of a General Election taking place. The second point is this. I trust that the strong expression of opinion that has come from Members sitting in every quarter of the House will strengthen the hands of the Government in their determination not only to get the Bill through this House, but also to see that it shall not emerge from the deliberations in another place in any emasculated form. We have known Bills of this sort to be passed through this House, and to lose all their vigour and vitality on account of Amendments introduced in another place. I hope the Government will not only act on the letter of the promise which has been made this evening, but also on its spirit, and that the Bill will be passed into law in as strong a form as it is passed through this House. My hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire referred to the position of private railways. It so happens that private railways are, for the purposes of legislation, neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring. The Home Office has nothing to do with them as factories, and the right hon. Gentleman does not see his way to bring them within the scope of this measure. I trust, however, he will be able to use his influence in order to have them included within the scope of the Home Secretary's Factories Bill.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I do not intend to add to the congratulations which have been offered to the President of the Board of Trade this evening. Speaking from the Irish point of view I accept the Bill for better or worse on the principle, of course, that it aims at bettering the condition of employees and safeguarding the public. If anything would make me doubt the statements I heard to-night about the excellence of the Bill, it would be the approval it has received from hon. Members interested in railway companies. I have rarely found a Bill praised by directors to be in the interests of the general public, and with that reservation I accept the Bill. I wish to direct the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to a matter which I think he will admit concerns Ireland. Clause 3 of the Bill states that there is to be an appeal to the Railway and Canal Commissioners. I think it is within the knowledge of certain hon. Members—it certainly is within my knowledge—that that body is neither known nor respected in Ireland. I had experience recently on a Committee on a Railway Bill, and witness after witness told us that they did not know of the existence of the Railway Commissioners, and the few who did know found it impossible to seek justice at their hands because of the enormous expense of appealing to that tribunal. If this Bill is to be of any use in Ireland, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider the advisability of setting up some cheaper tribunal where cases of dispute between traders and the railway companies, or cases of complaint by passengers, can be settled. The right hon. Gentleman is the man in the gap. He is now introducing railway legislation, and I ask him if it is not in his opinion a good opportunity for setting up some cheap and simple tribunal in Ireland. I am quite sure that my colleagues will endorse what I say, that there will be no possibility of getting justice from the railway companies in Ireland until we have a tribunal of appeal in Ireland. The hon. Member for South Islington, who is always practical, and who does not limit his knowledge to England alone, suggested that there should be an appeal to a county court judge in England. Surely it is even more necessary to have in Ireland a tribunal at the hands of the people, to which they could appeal. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to bear the matter in mind, as it will be

pressed on his attention again on a future stage of the Bill.

MR. COLVILLE (Lanarkshire, N.E.): On behalf of a large number of Scotch railway men, I desire to add a word of commendation of the Bill. It was, of course, a great disappointment to many of my constituents, as well as to railway men generally, that the Bill of last year did not find a place on the Statute-book, and while the present Bill does not go the length that many railway men desire, it is nevertheless a substantial advance in the direction of further safety for the lives and limbs of those engaged in railway work. The hon. Member for Wandsworth spoke of the unfortunate position in which the holders of railway debenture stock will find themselves. A good many would like to be in that unfortunate position, even with the prospect of the change proposed by this Bill. I agree with the hon. Member for South Islington that some less expensive court of appeal than the Railway Commissioners is necessary, because it is notorious that the rich, and the rich alone, have access to that tribunal.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [29th March], "That a Select Committee of Five Members of this House be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction."—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I regret that my hon. friend the Member for Stockton is not here to resume the practical part he commenced to take in this debate. I have been asked what is the view taken by the boroughs themselves on this question. At the Guildhall on Saturday last, at the meeting of the Association of Municipal Corporations, the following resolution was passed unanimously—

"This Association is opposed to any attempt to fix a hard and fast rule between what corporations may undertake and what they may not undertake."

That resolution was referred to the council of the association on the motion of Sir Thomas Hughes, one of the most active supporters of the Government; and on the motion of the ex-Lord Mayor of Liverpool, seconded by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, it was resolved that there was no valid reason for the appointment of a Committee, and that there were very strong objections to it. I would make a strong appeal to the Government even now to reconsider their determination. I would respectfully ask them whether they really think there is any adequate case for this resolution, and whether it does not in any case go far beyond the necessities of the situation, assuming that there may be some minor points on which further information would be desirable. Of course, we accept the assurance of the First Lord of the Treasury that there is no hostile intention towards corporations. I do not say it of my right hon. friend, but there has recently been a tendency rather to minimise the character of the motion, and it has been presented by my right hon. friend, as one would expect, in a much more favourable form than it had in the minds of its originators. The avowed object of the supporters of this motion is to put a limit to and a restraint upon the action of municipal authorities.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): Hear, hear!

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: My hon. colleague apparently approves of that, but he has not always taken a strong anti-municipal view of questions of this kind. I think it my duty to show what has been the origin of this proposal. Whatever may be said from the Treasury bench, it was proposed at the meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce the other day, first, to define the limits of municipal trading, and, secondly, to stop all Municipal Bills asking for new powers. Both these proposals were rejected, but I would point out by whom they were moved and seconded. The mover was

one of the chief promoters of some of the Electrical Companies' Bills recently before the House, and is also the chairman of the committee of the municipal trading movement at the Chamber of Commerce. The seconder is a very strong advocate of private as opposed to municipal enterprise. I do not wish to say one word against private enterprise. It has built up the industries of this country, it is a great economic force, and I wish to unreservedly disclaim any hostile attitude towards it, either in principle or in practice. We are now told that this motion would facilitate an adjustment of minor powers, and would indicate to committees, and especially to chairmen, how far they might go in certain administrative directions; but the Municipal Trading Committee have issued a paper which indicates what their objects are, and which, I think, shows that this motion sprung entirely from them in the first instance. There is no minimising in this paper. It attacks the supply of electricity, tramways, markets, gas, baths and washhouses, workmen's dwellings, slaughter houses, crematoria, &c., &c. What I want to point out is that in the opinion of this Municipal Trading Committee this is not an administrative question, not a question of detail for the guidance of committees, but a direct attack on municipal institutions. They forgot or overlooked the fact that many of these things to which they are so strongly opposed have been in existence for many years, in some cases for centuries, and from the tone of their document they appear surprised at the multiplicity of municipal institutions, which, to all connected with municipal work, are everyday matters, rendering untold value to the boroughs in which they exist. What is the genesis of this motion? It did not emanate in the first instance from the Government. I would not suspect my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury of any such intention as is thus indicated in this motion. I wish to say on behalf of the municipalities that we take up no unreasonable position. We are guided and will be guided not by *a priori* amateurish and academic considerations, but by a full knowledge of the work which is done in our boroughs and by the advantages which that work has conferred on the people. We do not seek to attack private enterprise, and we do not wish to enter into competitive trading, properly so called, with individuals or companies. We merely wish to retain our right to do our own work in our own way with reasonable developments in accordance with the progress of the time, and with only one object, namely, to do our best to serve the community. Let me ask next what is the spirit which has been breathed by those who have been strong supporters of this motion? The Chairman of the Committee on the Huddersfield Tramways Bill, the hon. Member for North Hants, admitted that the Bill had been promoted by the municipality of Huddersfield, at the request of the outlying townships, for the purpose of giving them the advantage of better travelling facilities. Among other things, the Bill provided for the substitution of electricity for steam power and to extend the system to outlying townships, which in reality are a congeries of small manufacturing towns. What happened? The Bill was divided in two, and the power to connect the townships was refused; and on what ground? Because, forsooth, the question of municipal trading was said to be *sub judice*. There were plenty of precedents; the Manchester Tramways Bill had only recently been passed, and there was also the Light Railways Act of 1896, which affirms that most important principle—the co-operation of local authorities in dealing with matters of this sort. The Chairman of that Committee also said, and the statement shows again the spirit and, as I think, the very mistaken view which is taken of this question, that we should look after the ratepayers. What borough has applied to this House to be looked after? What ratepayer has made a protest to the House against this alleged municipal trading? The municipalities and the ratepayers are well able to take care of themselves; they do not require any protection, and they are the best judges of their own interests. They have plenty of statutory protection already. They have the Borough Funds Act with its cumbersome machinery, and they have also the difficulty and cost of obtaining a Bill at all, which is very often a great deterrent to municipalities attempting to extend their operations and public improvements. To borrow they have also to satisfy the President of the Local Government Board of the value of their proposals, and all these checks must be met before they can obtain the powers they desire. *The Times*, in dealing with

this question, said that there must be some check from outside. I altogether demur to that. The check, if there is to be a check, is that Gentlemen should go inside our councils and should take part in municipal work and should learn, by practical experience, and I am convinced that the worst way to attract the best men is to limit the powers and responsibilities of the municipalities. I would ask the House why this resolution has been put on the Paper. I do not think any specific reasons except those which I have discussed in passing have been given in support of the proposal. What is meant by muncipal trading? Let us have specific instances of it put before the House, and the objections to these specific instances, and I am certain that the result of the consideration of these cases will be to show clearly that practically no powers have been asked for except what are incidental and accessory, and almost necessary to the wise, prudent, and successful exercise of the powers which have been already conferred by law. I do not deny that here and there there may be an aspiration for further powers by a municipality, but that is exceptional, and I repeat emphatically that so far from trying to invade private enterprise, there is no desire on the part of the boroughs to enter into true competitive trading in any way whatever; they have more important duties to perform than that. I will ask the House what are the disclosed intentions of the promoters of this movement. I refer again to the document which has been issued by the Municipal Trading Committee. It is dated 26th February, 1900, and it contains a list of these so called municipal tradings which, I take it, are the indictment against our municipalities. I read that indictment and I ask myself whether it bears out the proposal for a committee of investigation—in other words, to put municipalities on their trial. I think it will be found, as I have already stated, that the powers sought are incidental and necessary with, perhaps, some very few exceptions. In this list telephones are first mentioned; but it is only a year since Parliament conferred powers, after several Committees, to municipalise the telephones, and what more guidance is required? There was a Joint Committee as recently as 1898, and now a further Committee is proposed to consider the question. The next subject mentioned is the supply of electricity. I know of no one who objects to the boroughs having that power. [Lord BALCARRES: What about saddlery?] I have left that out deliberately, and I will ask my hon. friend to give me the name of the borough in which it is carried on. I do not believe that it exists, but even if it does the explanation will probably be that saddlery is carried on to supply the horses and carts used in municipal work, and not for the purpose of competitive trading. As to electricity, we know what Manchester is doing on a splendid scale cheaply and well, both inside and outside the borough. We do not want a Committee to consider that. I would ask what would the outlying districts of Manchester do if the municipality had not the power to supply them with electric light. Let me take the case of underground water being taken from a neighbouring township for the purposes of a water supply. Is that township to be prevented from obtaining a supply from the municipality taking its underground water, which is often made a condition of such a Bill, by the outlying districts? Then the manufacture of electric fittings is incidental to the main power, and cannot be regarded as competitive trading. As to markets, many of them have come to the municipalities under ancient charters. Gas is apparently spoken of as something entirely new. Then the manufacture of residual products is mentioned, as if a corporation carrying on a gas industry are to be deprived of the very thing which is one of the chief sources of profit. There is next the construction and management of refreshment rooms in parks, and apparatus for games and music. That is merely incidental to the management of the parks. It is what the Board of Works and the Ranger of the Royal Parks do, and what every municipality ought to have the power to do.

MR. COHEN: Refrigerators.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I will undertake to deal with each case when I come to it, and I will not forget cold-storage. The obvious point is that the corporation should not do its own work of construction. I am not wedded to any theory. There may be cases in which it would be wise for a corporation to employ a contractor, and there may be other cases in which it is best for the

municipal authority to do their own work. It is a question of local conditions and the variation of local prices. I do not advocate a rigid rule that municipalities should do their own work, but I do say that there are many cases in which it is prudent and economical, and therefore right, for municipalities to have the power to do their own work if they think proper. Sheffield is mentioned, with its baths and washhouses, and a Turkish bath. Well, the Turkish bath is only a development of the older principle. These baths are not only a luxury of the rich, but in many cases a necessity, and as a development of the principle I do not see why they should be denied, on payment, to the poor. It must be remembered that they are reproductive and remunerative undertakings, and therefore not a source of loss. I contend that this is a matter of evidence in particular cases. There may be private organisations in some boroughs which provide these baths, but if not, why should not the municipalities undertake the duty, if the people wish for them, and, as bathers, pay for each bath, to the profit of the municipality? Workmen's dwellings. I thought it was understood and recognised that it was one of the first duties of municipalities to provide these against overcrowding, and in the interest of the common health. One very grave charge relates to municipal fire insurance, but when that is investigated it appears to be the establishment of a sinking fund to provide against accident by fire. Many people constantly do that, and why should we deny to the municipalities the right to safeguard the ratepayers' public property? Then there is the acquisition of patent rights. When you have in industrial undertakings employees who have taken out patents, it is often part of the agreement that the employer should acquire their patent rights for a certain amount. Why should municipalities be denied a right which is constantly claimed by private individuals and also by the Government? Now there are one or two things that I do not altogether approve of. A very progressive London borough—not a provincial borough—has applied for power to manufacture and sell paving and materials for paving. It may be said that that is analogous to municipalities doing their own paving work. The manufacture of a paving may be wise; but the selling of it raises a question on which there is room for great difference of opinion. However, that is a power which is only being sought for, and which the Committee upstairs may refuse.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman; but I wish to know whether the undertakings which he is reciting have been actually approved of and brought into operation, or whether they are proposals only.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: These things are all grouped together in the list, and they are headed, "Trading undertakings by municipal and other local bodies, already existing or proposed, or for which Parliamentary powers are being sought." I am most thankful to the right hon. Gentleman for enabling me to give that answer. There are some cases on the borderland, and these are a matter for evidence and the determination of the Committee. I take another case—the provision of nurses in the case of infectious diseases, and the making of a charge for the nurses. That is obviously connected with municipal infectious diseases hospitals and sanitary arrangements. The acquiring and working of lifts. That is a special case, and refers to Hastings. The lift there is for the accommodation of the people in going to and coming from the beach, and what is that but practically a road or way—a work distinctly for municipalities as the road authority?

MR. COHEN: It is on a level.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I thought my hon. friend was more level-headed. I do not believe that the municipality of Hastings or any other municipality is so foolish as to seek to provide a lift on a level. The lift is for the purpose of visiting the corporation grounds and gardens, and mounting the cliffs, which would otherwise be difficult, especially for those in search of health. Well, there is another case that I take to be exceptional—the supply of sea water. If fresh water, why not sea water? It would be a grand thing if we had sea water here in London as easily supplied as fresh water. It would solve the London water question by saving the drinking water, instead of watering the streets with it. This case evidently refers to Ramsgate,

and it is quite likely the sea water is supplied for curative purposes. At any rate, the people of Ramsgate know what is best in their own interest, better than we know here, and better than any Committee will teach them. If they do not know they ought not to be a municipality. I will now take another case—cold air storage. Anyone who is at all familiar with modern commerce knows that that has become absolutely necessary. If they do not know it, let them go to the interior of Russia, and continental ports, and witness the developments there in regard to cold storage. But it is costly, and I understand this proposal of Salford is as the harbour authority and in connection with the Manchester Canal, a great public work. At any rate, the ratepayers know what they want, and they have the right to come to Parliament and ask for cold storage, and Parliament may or may not give them the right. It is a matter for evidence before the Committee whether it would be in the interests of the community. I have gone through this list fairly well. [An HON. MEMBER: Bazaars.] Well, what sort of bazaars? These may be bazaars like those we find in Turkey, but I cannot deal with a case of that sort, and I do not know of any Bill dealing with bazaars. I think I have fairly shown that what has been sought for may be fairly described as analogous and incidental to the powers always conferred by Parliament. At any rate, I have defended my position that this is not a matter for investigation by a special Committee. I have a few words to say about the history of the development of local government, and this is the key of the whole matter. Let me ask the House to seriously consider how the municipalities work for the health and strength of the people, and whether these have been built up by being limited within hard-and-fast bounds. What has been the evolution of true municipal work? Men in our towns and cities have groped through difficulties and darkness into light to serve the people. It has been inevitable that there should be experimental Bills, and the municipalities have been the pioneers of Parliament in this matter. How have the great Codes, such as the Public Health Acts, been brought together? By public statutes proposed in this House? Not at all, but culled from Private Bills and Acts promoted by municipalities, and then thrown into Codes, and if there had been a resolution in this House which would have curtailed municipal effort we should not have had a great deal of beneficial legislation. Let me apply the practical test of results. I ask the House to consider the phenomenal success which has attended these splendidly remunerative efforts in the interests of the people. No jeering about bazaars can interfere with the facts. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton obtained a Return which shows some striking results. Upon a net capital, including borrowed money, of eighty-eight and odd millions sterling the average annual net profit to municipalties has been £3,600,000, or, in other words, a return of over 4 per cent.—a return which is not excessive, and which also shows a fair regard for the interests of the consumers, and, therefore, of the industries of the boroughs in which the works are carried on. The profits from waterworks have amounted to £1,700,000, and the net profits from gas to £1,180,000. Tramways, electric light, markets, baths, dwellings have all been profitable. I am not taking into account such public works as libraries, museums, etc., which are not reproductive, but which have brought indirectly enormous advantages to the people. I have collected statistics which more than confirm these results, and which show also that there have been loan funds, sinking funds, and provision for depreciation. But profit is not the only consideration. The people at their own cost have executed many of these works, but they have also had to buy out many speculative companies to prevent different bodies dealing with the streets in the municipalities. That has been a great tax on the municipalities. Consider, too, the attachment of the people to their own work in their own municipality. I ask again, why is this Committee to be appointed? Assuming that it may do some little good, what is to compensate for the cost, and the harassing and hampering in improvements of our corporations during the period of a possibly long inquiry. Why, the Electric Light Inquiry lasted some months, and proved adverse to the municipalities, because it had not upon it that expert representation which is so essentially necessary in these matters. I hope at least that if a tribunal is to be appointed, care will be taken that there

Sir Albert Rollit.

are those on it who know these subjects practically from personal acquaintance, and who will be able to put before the Committee information which is so absolutely necessary in dealing with them. The Council of the Municipalities Association, at a meeting at the Mansion House on Saturday last, passed a resolution in reference to this matter. The rider to that resolution is as follows—

"While the council can see no valid reason for the appointment of the proposed Committee, and while there are the strongest objections to it, it will not take active steps to oppose the motion, inasmuch as the municipalities feel that no case can possibly be established in favour of the limitation of their powers, provided that the Committee is constituted judicially, and there are upon it Members possessing practical municipal knowledge and experience, provided also that every opportunity is afforded to the municipalities of being heard, and of producing evidence on their behalf."

I am glad that that important association have passed that resolution, because on the Electric Lighting Committee the representation of the municipalties was limited, and they were limited to one counsel, and were not allowed to call the witnesses they desired. I apologise to the House for the time I have occupied. I have been burdened with the task to plead on the part of institutions and bodies to which I have been most sincerely attached, and of the value of whose work I have practical knowledge. I appeal to the Government to consider once more whether they will persist in a motion which, though it may have some small advantage from an administrative point of view, may be seriously prejudicial to the best interests of some of our most valuable public institutions

SIR SAMUEL HOARE (Norwich): In rising to support the motion, I would say at once that there is no Member who is a stronger supporter of municipal enterprise than I am. The main reason why I speak is that in the great city I represent some few years ago a difficulty arose in regard to the carrying out of municipal enterprises which confirmed me in the belief that it was necessary there should be some inquiry on this subject. I cannot quite follow the hon. Member for South Islington in the long list of industries either carried out or proposed by municipalities; for I came to the House without any knowledge of that list, and without expecting it to be brought forward. I did not hear from the Leader of the House or from the President of the Board of Trade any attack against any of these municipal enterprises. On the contrary, I heard sympathy from the Leader of the House, who distinctly said that what the Government asked for was not a judgment on an abstract question, but some general guidance from both Houses of Parliament as to the method in which Parliament was to deal from time to time with the innumerable practical problems that come before us in regard to practical legislation; and it is because this motion is aimed at that important subject that I venture to crave the indulgence of the House for a few moments. While the House naturally heard with interest the remarks of my hon. friend on these industries, I hope the House at the same time will not be unmindful of the work they impose on their own colleagues, and that they will consider that this motion is brought forward in order to give some guidance to those on whom the responsibility of taking the evidence, and going through these municipal Bills, must necessarily rest. It is necessary for us to remember that it is not merely the Committees upstairs which sit on Private Bills that require some guidance on these matters, for the promoters of these enterprises have not necessarily to go before Private Bill Committees. We all know that there are Provisional Orders which pass through the Departments; and in the case of unopposed Bills we know that a heavy responsibility is placed on the Chairmen of Committees and the Chairmen of Ways and Means, who have to investigate these Bills. I feel confident I am right in saying that not merely Committees upstairs, but Government Departments, and those responsible for unopposed Bills will be glad of, and have a right to have, some guidance from the House on this question. Applications to Parliament by municipalities for powers have enormously increased of late years. I am glad of that. It is a sign of enterprise in municipal life. It is a sign of good, and, in many cases, of very successful work. But let me tell the House how curiously the work upstairs has changed. It has been my lot to be a Member for many years of the Railway and Canal Committee, but the Bills that come before that Committee do not relate only to railways and canals.

It is somewhat strange that this year the three opposed Bills which came before it were all municipal Bills—two from thriving municipalities with reference to tramways, and one from the London County Council. If I might mention it to show that these Bills are very large in their requirements, I may say that the London County Council required powers to raise three millions sterling in order to pay for electric traction on their tramways. Of course, after we have considered these three Bills in the ordinary course, they have found their way down to the House. It is always said that the House has a final voice to pass any Bill opposed or unopposed; but the House has always shown a great loyalty to the decision of the Committees upstairs. They have felt that the Committees have decided upon a great deal of evidence, expert and local, with the assistance of the most eminent men at the Bar, and the decisions of the Committees have, with very few exceptional cases, been generally supported. Now, there has been a great extension of the demands on the Committees, and questions arise which would not have been thought of twenty years ago, and would not have been considered ten years ago; and if the work of the Committees upstairs and of the Departments is to be satisfactorily carried out, we must work more or less on the same lines, reserving a certain amount of latitude when that may be necessary. That brings me to the point in the motion which is the one that gives us upstairs the greatest trouble, namely, industrial enterprises within and without the area of municipal jurisdiction. Now, we have to work by Standing Orders; but the Standing Order in regard to tramways, for instance, does not satisfy the circumstances we are now in. I will give a case in point. There is no question at the present of greater importance than the housing of the working classes, and the only solution is to remove large numbers of them into the country by means of tramways. The Standing Order states that we may allow municipalities to acquire tramways outside their area if they are joined to tramways inside; but suppose the municipalities cannot obtain the tramways inside, and the lines having been constructed under the Act, the tramway companies perhaps have sixteen or seventeen years to run; ought not the municipality under these circumstances to have the power to acquire the tramways outside rather than let them get into other hands? I think even hon. Gentlemen opposite will see that there is some ground for more latitude in connection with that matter, and yet we are tied down practically by this Standing Order. I come to the matter of finance. I know it is said that Parliament may pass any Bill it likes, and put into it any financial clauses it thinks desirable; but at the same time a great deal of care and caution are exercised in doing it. There is nothing at the present moment that causes greater difficulty in Committees upstairs than the fact that loans are borrowed for certain periods, and that there is great uncertainty as to how long these periods should be, especially in connection with electric traction. I think that the House would acknowledge that the Committees should be uniform as far as possible in their decisions, and that the general precedents and rules upon which we have acted in the past should be acted on in the future also. I have two Reports in my hand, one dated the 22nd and the other the 23rd of March. The Report dated 22nd of March refers to a tramway undertaking including street improvements, and the period assigned for repayment is forty years. In the Report dated 23rd of March, which concerns the construction of a tramway with provisions for electric traction, the period assigned for repayment is thirty years. During this session we have had some periods of forty years and some of thirty years, and the promoters often ask for longer periods. Let me take another matter. The period for paying off expenses connected with a Bill is usually five years, but a Report issued a few days ago stated that the period should be ten years. These may be small matters, but I can assure the House that I attach great weight to them. There is great uncertainty as to how long electric traction will last, and much doubt as to whether renewals may not be required from time to time; and this House, for the protection of municipalities and the ratepayers, should arrive at some definite decision. I do not think that any hon. Member will feel that it is not wrong that it should be left to Committees upstairs to settle these questions. I think, when we are sent upstairs to do the work, the House ought to tell us the lines on which they wish that work to be carried out. There are other points also on which it is

desirable that the House should lay down some rule. An hon. Gentleman opposite in the previous debate used the expression "free trade for municipalities." I believe that expression was cheered by hon. Gentlemen, and it is one which I would cheer myself, and it is because I think that municipalities should have free trade that I say that they should be allowed to acquire tramways outside their own area. It is necessary that municipalities should have power to carry their working classes outside, and there is no matter connected with this question on which I feel more strongly. But hon. Gentlemen must remember that when the working classes are removed out of one locality they are taken into another locality, perhaps into the area of another local body which has the hope of one day becoming a municipality itself. So far as I can make out, we have no rules laid down as to what should be done by municipalities in such cases, and I do think that this proposed Committee, if it enquired into these matters, would be able to make suggestions that might be most useful to the municipalities themselves. I should hope that those suggestions would take the line that every municipality has a right to be heard and represented on any undertaking which goes through its own district. At present, so far as I know, there is no such power whatever. When we talk of free trade for local authorities I think those outside the borough should also have a voice in what is carried out, and should have representation on a Joint Committee or something of that sort. What is the objection to this Committee? My hon. friend states that the proposal for the Committee originated among certain people who desire to do away with all the great industries which the municipalities wish to carry on. I am entirely at a loss to know on what he bases that opinion, or what foundation he has for his statement. But is it not sufficient for the House to know that in the working of the House there are difficulties which the Committee would consider and probably remove? It must, of course, be a Joint Committee; it would not do to have one system in the House of Commons and another in the House of Lords. Again, the recommendations of the Committee will not be the law of the land and cannot interfere with the freedom of the municipalities. The Committee will put before us evidence as to the points on which difficulties arise, and if the House says that these points are not worth attending to, then the Report of the Committee will be sent down to the cellars of this House, where there are a good many other Reports already. The Committee would relieve the House of certain difficulties and would inquire into this great and novel extension of business throughout the country, with which I have the warmest sympathy and which I should be very glad to see prosper. I believe the result of the Committee will be to place before the House and the country many important facts, and I shall be very disappointed if it does not result, not only in making our proceedings in this House more uniform, and helping us to do the work we have to do; but also in further facilitating that municipal enterprise which we all have at heart, and which we all wish to see flourish.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down seemed to express surprise that things were different to-day from what they were twenty years ago. I think we must all recognise that at present we are living in an age of progress; even the Government themselves recognise that fact by the legislation which they have introduced. I was delighted with the speech delivered by the hon. Member for South Islington; after that speech he ought to take his place on this side of the House instead of on the other. For eleven years the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was one of my representatives in this House; during the whole of that period I followed his career, and although, perhaps, I did not vote for him, yet at the same time he was considered a man of progressive tendencies, hence his influence in the Tower Hamlets. That being so, I was surprised at the speech he delivered the other evening on this subject, because, instead of that speech being of a progressive character it was of a very moderate character indeed. He stated that it was not the intention of the Government to interfere with corporations. If there is no intention on behalf of the Government to interfere with municipal enterprise so far as local authorities and corporations are concerned, why the need and the necessity for this motion to-night? I have no doubt if the hon. Gentleman

the Member for East Islington spoke on this motion this evening, he would put a far different interpretation upon it to that put by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington. I have in my mind a most lively recollection of the attacks made on the London County Council during the years 1895 to 1898. What for? Not because it was competing with private enterprise, but simply because it had the courage to establish a Works Department of its own, so that the profits of the contractor should go into the pockets of the ratepayers. These attacks were made by the Moderate party on the Progressive party, and we know that accusations were brought especially against the Labour members of the Council, not only inside the Council, but also outside in their organs in the press. We welcomed the fullest investigation into the Works Department. A Committee was appointed, and not one single charge was proved against any member of the Council with reference either to jobbery or securing employment for trade unionists. So far as the London County Council is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that the hon. Member for East Islington would be quite prepared to clip its municipal enterprise if he had the opportunity, and for that reason I have no doubt he will cordially support the motion now before the House. What sins has the County Council committed? It has established a Works Department, though not in all cases, and in many cases has abolished the contractor; it has taken over a few miles of tramway on the south side of the river Thames by powers which Parliament has also given to other municipalities, and during the twelve months that tramway system has been worked by the County Council it has improved the condition of its employees by spending £25,000 in increasing their wages and reducing their hours of work; and apart from that, it has not forgotten the interests of the ratepayers, because it has placed £43,000 in their pockets by reducing the rates. It has provided parks and open spaces for the people of London, and it has provided bands for the amusement of the people of London. And when we speak of bands in our parks and open spaces in the evenings, if the County Council were not in existence, I want to know would private enterprise have stepped in and have provided those parks and open spaces, and bands, for the amusement of the people? It is a well-known fact that the only body, until the County Council came into existence, that supplied bands was the National Sunday League; but since the County Council has been in existence it has spent something like £8,000 per annum in providing bands in parks and open spaces, in order to afford the working man and his wife and family an opportunity of listening to good music on Sunday evening, and any hon. Member walking along the Thames Embankment can listen to one of the finest bands we have in London. That is as far as the County Council has gone up to the present in municipal enterprise. Our lighting is in the hands of companies, and our water is in the hands of companies. After all, Parliament at the present time has a check, and a very important check, on municipal enterprise. Take only the action of this House a week ago with reference to the Water Bills of the London County Council. We are not allowed to have control of the water or of the gas, although the ratepayers of London endorse our views, otherwise they would not give us the majority we have on the Council. We spend thousands of pounds of the ratepayers' money every year. What for? Not to put money into our own pockets. An hon. Member, when this motion was being discussed last week, stated that the railway companies did not use the ratepayers' money. That is true; neither railway companies nor gas nor water companies use the ratepayers' money in the first instance when they are building their works or getting their Bills through Parliament, but they take the ratepayers' money to a pretty good extent after the works are in existence. What is the difference between a monopoly, such as a water or gas company, and a municipality? The company works for profits for its directors and shareholders, and the municipality works in the interest of the ratepayers, and in order to secure for them the profits which otherwise would go into the pockets of the shareholders; and yet we are debarred, so far as London is concerned, from being able to take these steps. A great deal of stress has been laid upon the fact that Committees upstairs want some guidance in connection with Electric Lighting Bills, and that there should be uniformity of action. What is the present law? An

electric lighting company can apply to the local authority and the local authority has discretion either to allow them to apply to the Board of Trade for a Provisional Order or to apply for one themselves. In many cases in London, the local authorities have handed their powers over to companies, and the companies have applied to the Board of Trade for Provisional Orders which have b en granted. That, I maintain, should be sufficient guidance for a Committee engaged on any of these Bills. I read a speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton a short time ago, in which he stated how far, in his opinion, municipalities should go with reference to taking over gas, water, and other monopolies. Personally I say it will be a bad day for this country if its municipalities are guided by the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman. What made the Secretary of State for the Colonies so popular in Birmingham? Why, the work he did in the corporation of that city before he became a Member of this House. Two or three years ago I was shown in Birmingham the work which the right hon. Gentleman accomplished during the time he was a member of the corporation, and in one case alone, as a result of his labours, a considerable income will be brought in in years to come which will relieve Birmingham of nearly all its rates. If municipal enterprise to that degree is good in Birmingham, why should it not be good in every city in the United Kingdom? I want to be perfectly candid upon this matter. I am not in favour, myself, of municipalities starting municipal workshops and becoming competitors with private employers in the labour market, because that would not in any way improve the condition of the workers. It makes no difference to the worker whether he is employed by a private employer or by a municipality, so long as he gets his trade union rate of wages, and if a municipality to-morrow were to start municipal workshops on competitive lines, they would not pay the workers higher than the trade union rate of wages. But I am strongly in favour of monopolies such as gas, water, and tramways being worked by the municipalities in the interests of the community as a whole, and not in the interests of a comparatively few shareholders. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton had in his mind when he made that speech the action of the London County Council with reference to the National Telephone Company. If he imagined that the municipality was going to allow his company to pull up the streets and roads of London just as they thought fit, he was very seriously mistaken. I see no reason for this motion at all. If you have no idea of interfering with the present powers of our municipalities, then why press this motion to a division? If, on the other hand, you have an idea of crippling the powers of the municipalities, which I believe is at the root of this motion, then the sooner you let the ratepayers know it the better. As far as I am concerned, it is an old and a true saying to let sleeping dogs lie. Any attack that may be made by a Committee of this House on the municipal enterprise of the London County Council from a political point of view may be the means of putting some life and interest into the voters. The elections are near, and the result may be that a number of Unionist Members may be told to go about their business, and that there may be a majority of Progressive and Liberal Members in this House such as we have to-day on the London County Council. I hope that this motion will not be pressed to a division, although I recognise that unless the Government are prepared to withdraw it their majority will be sufficient to carry it. We have gone along very well during the last few years. We hope to go along very well in the years to come, and for that reason if the motion is divided upon, I shall certainly record my vote against it.

*SIR BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): I feel compelled on this occasion to declare myself opposed to the appointment of this Committee. I do so from altogether different reasons to those which have been adduced by the last speaker. I feel myself, if you appoint this Committee—five Members of the House of Commons and five Members of the House of Lords—it will be a question as to what will be the extent of their inquiry, and not of the way they are going to deal with this important subject. The House of Commons has hitherto always dealt with this subject of the different Private Bills brought forward in a comprehensive and lucid manner. They have inquired

what is and what is not considered necessary. The hon. Member just now complained as to the way in which in different years it was considered necessary to have different laws. We all know that for different localities different dates are necessary for the repayment of loans. You cannot say that all localities should have the same terms. If the Committee is to be appointed, what is to be the extent of its inquiry? Is the Committee to go into the whole subject of municipal trading? Are we to have an inquiry into the question of having municipal banks, bakeries, and washhouses? In fact, the motion as it is drawn is on the largest extent possible. It will entirely depend upon the Members who are put upon the Committee as to the way in which they would deal with this motion. To appoint, as I know the other side would appoint, two Members in favour of municipal trading, and to appoint, as I am sure the Government would appoint, perhaps, my hon. friend down below me, the Member for South Islington, and even if the two other Members were opposed to municipal trading, what would be the result? These three Members, all in favour, going into the Committee upstairs would go from the House of Commons pledged to support municipal trading in every way possible. I am opposed to municipal trading. I hold it is not for the advantage of the community at large that we should have these workshops started all over the country, and, being a commercial man myself, I am certain that this House would make the greatest mistake possible if we entrusted this inquiry to a Committee such as you propose to constitute with unlimited power. I can imagine that Committee sitting upstairs. All sorts of people would be brought from different constituencies in favour of municipal workshops of all descriptions. What is to be the limit and what are to be the lines to be laid down? We know that municipalities in different parts of the country work on different lines. We in London know very well that the supply of water in certain districts has been well managed by municipal corporations in such places as Manchester, Liverpool, and other parts. We think, however, the London County Council would be the wrong body to entrust with the management of London water. That is one instance to show that it is impossible for you to lay down any fixed and definite law on which the Committees upstairs are to act. Every Bill ought to be dealt with by itself upon the particular circumstances of the case. To lay down any fixed law would be virtually like passing a vote of censure on the House of Commons. I cannot imagine any Bill being brought before the House of Commons and not being able to be discussed and inquired into upstairs. Do not tie the House of Commons with the rules and regulations laid down by your proposed Committee, consisting of Members of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Let us have, as we have had in the past, all the circumstances brought before us in a proper way and inquired into in a thorough manner. I do not consider the way in which this motion is worded is such as is due to the responsibility of the House of Commons. I do not consider that in dealing with the proposals of municipalities you should lay down a fixed law. What is good for London may not be good for Liverpool, Manchester, or Glasgow. Let all matters be dealt with in a thorough and practical way, and inquired into as it is our duty to inquire into them. I must say I am exceedingly sorry to find that some of the Members of the Government are rather persistent in forcing this motion, which I believe is detrimental to the well-being of the procedure of this House; and if the Government goes to a division I shall decidedly vote against it.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): Unlike the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I believe there are good reasons for the proposal to appoint a Committee, and I wish to associate myself with my hon. friend the Member for Norwich in bearing testimony to the difficulties often met with upstairs, and to the desire we have to formulate a principle on this matter, and, I would add, to get some more knowledge of precedents. I believe if we had a collection of the precedents in relation to municipal trading that the information would be of very considerable benefit on the Private Bill Committees of this House. At present we are at the mercy of any counsel who chooses to quote any particular precedent to his own advantage, and to say nothing of others. Then there is no opportunity of calling and sifting evidence, and we

have no principle whatever to guide us. The London Members who have spoken in the debate think, no doubt, that we have all the check that is required to the Committees in the voice of this House as a whole. It is perfectly true that London Bills are discussed and rejected in this House over and over again. I think very often we make a great mistake in not sending these Bills upstairs to be considered on their merits, but we cannot apply that principle to the Private Bills that reach us from all parts of the country. The House would break down if it once began to investigate for itself all those measures, and therefore we must look to the Private Bills Committees as the regular tribunals to consider these questions, and I think they are entitled to a little more guidance than they have hitherto had. I look at the subject from a broader point of view. Do not Members agree that this matter of municipal trading is one that is exciting great interest in every part of the country? It has assumed enormous proportions. I do not speak as an opponent of municipal enterprise. I do not belong to those municipal trading bodies, nor am I one of those much abused bodies the company promoters. Wherever I go I hear people discussing this question from various points of view, and I think that the inquiry may be of the great possible benefit to guide public opinion outside the House. We are all agreed that certain enterprises may be carried on by municipalities, such matters as gas, water, and tramways. On the other hand, most of us believe that there are certain forms of trading which cannot be legitimately undertaken by municipal bodies; and between these two extremes there is large debatable ground. There are some who wish to have municipal manufactories, but whether they are incidental or not to municipal work they become manufacturing enterprises in competition with private enterprises. Then, only to mention shortly another class of trading—that outside of municipal boroughs. One would imagine, from what the hon. Member for South Islington has told us, that the whole of this country consisted of municipalities and nothing else, and that, if it could be proved that tramway undertakings or any other kind of trading could be carried on by the municipalities to the interest of the ratepayers of those municipalities, they should get power to do so.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: On the contrary, I said my argument was based on the principle of the co-operation of local authorities.

MR. HOBHOUSE: That is a very vague expression. I have the opinion that some of the best supporters of my hon. friend do not take quite the same view of corporations. There are further important questions to be considered. We may well ask what the economic and political results are of using large sums of the ratepayers' money in competition with the money of private undertakings, and employing vast bodies of workmen who can control their employers. These are all questions of great moment affecting this matter of municipal trading. I do not wish to suggest to the House that they should be solved one way or another, but I do submit that they are deserving of careful inquiry by a strong Committee. Why are municipalities so opposed to the inquiry? They are resisting the inquiry. Why do they object? I understood that one of the conditions on which they assented to it was that they should be allowed to employ more than one counsel. I should have thought that a Committee of this kind, if strongly manned, and if it called before it proper representatives of municipal enterprise, and of the great commercial interests, to put the case clearly from their own point of view, might come to some determination without much expense and without much delay. I do not think such a Committee will draw what my hon. friend calls a hard-and-fast line. That would be a very unwise thing to do, but they could suggest some principles of action which would guide both the mass of ratepayers and the Committees of the House in defining the legitimate field for municipal enterprise, and be of assistance to us and to corporations in framing the legislation of this country.

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich): One thing is quite clear, and that is that the municipalities of this country put a very different construction on the appointment of the Committee from that stated by the supporters of the motion. That is the answer to the question put by the hon. Member who has just sat down. The

municipalities object to it, because they see in the appointment of this Committee an attempt made to limit their powers. No one has attempted to suggest that the appointment of this Committee is with the object of extending the powers of municipalities in the matter of trading. The object from first to last really has been to control their powers, and that is one of the reasons why they object to it. Take it on the ground laid down by the hon. Baronet the Member for Norwich, that it is very desirable for Committees upstairs to have some definite ruling as to what they should do with the municipal bills. He mentioned the different periods that are given for the repayment of loans—in one case thirty years, and in another forty years. It seems to me that is a great proof of the common sense of this House. These Committees always have been in the habit, and are in the habit to-day, of judging every case that comes before them, on its merits, and I believe it is because they have adopted that plan and gone on that principle that the Committees upstairs have been deemed the most impartial kind of authority to which those Bills can be submitted, because they have taken into account all the circumstances of the case, and have dealt with them according to their ideas of common sense. I submit it would be a very sad thing indeed to tie the hands of the Committees upstairs by suggesting, as was almost suggested by the hon. Member for Norwich, that there should be some rule limiting the period for the repayment of loans. The conditions of large towns differ, and you must vary the time according to these different circumstances.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE: We are absolutely limited to sixty years now.

MR. GODDARD: I am quite aware of that, but the variations suggested are altogether below that limit, and that is a limit that is rarely reached. In the matter of tramways you never come to the limit of sixty years. I submit that it would be a fatal thing for these Committees to have their hands tied, and only to allow thirty or forty years for one particular kind of industry. Anyone who has followed the experience of Committees in regard to municipal authorities obtaining powers for waterworks knows that a great variety of time is allowed in these Bills for the repayment of the loans required for the undertakings, for the simple reason that the circumstances have varied considerably. I have had personal experience in this matter in connection with a transfer to the Corporation of Ipswich. Having stated my case before the Committee, the Chairman of the Committee did make some alteration in the period of years and gave us, I think, more liberal terms than I had anticipated at first. It shows that every municipality that brings a Bill to acquire some industrial undertaking varies in its conditions from others, and ought to be treated in a different way. I really must repeat the question as to who has asked for this inquiry that is suggested in the resolution. I am not going into the genesis of the matter. That has been done fully and ably by the hon. Member for South Islington. It was suggested by an hon. Member that it was brought forward for the protection of the ratepayers. I would ask, have the ratepayers of this country asked in any way whatever that there should be some inquiry about the municipalities acquiring industrial undertakings? I cannot recall having heard such a thing at all. The ratepayer is amply protected at the present time against his own Corporation going in for some form of municipal trading he does not desire. It must be perfectly familiar to every hon. Member that before a Bill can be promoted in this House for carrying on any kind of municipal trading there must be a meeting of ratepayers, and any single ratepayer can demand a poll of the town. That gives an excellent opportunity, if there is any objection to the speculation on municipal trading, to oppose it. As a matter of fact, there is no difficulty of the kind. A few years ago, when it was considered that there was more risk in conducting these enterprises than to-day, there frequently was considerable opposition by the ratepayers. The schemes for acquiring waterworks and gasworks were opposed by the ratepayers and the schemes were dropped. The ratepayers have seen that it is a good thing for the municipality and the ratepayers at large that these undertakings should be in the hands of the ratepayers' representatives; they no longer oppose these things, and are willing to carry them out. I am always in favour of government by the people, and I believe we will strike a

great blow at government by the people if we in any way seek to interfere with the municipal authorities in carrying on the trading which has been so successful in the past. I can understand speculators and capitalists and men who wish to invest their money in these various undertakings objecting to the municipalities doing the work, but I put that on one side at once as a reason that is not worth discussing. Have municipalities been unsuccessful, or have they mismanaged the undertakings, or given evidence of incompetence? On the contrary, the experience is that wherever municipalities have taken up these branches of trade—gas, water, electric lighting, and tramways—the invariable result, after time has been given to get over the initial difficulties, is that they are profitable to the ratepayers and that they should be so conducted. I cannot see any reason for an inquiry of this sort. However much you may try to make it a matter of assisting the Committees upstairs, in the eyes of the people outside it will be considered that the appointment of the Committee is an attempt to strike a blow at the municipalities in their trading enterprises.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I hope that the result of the inquiry will be that certain rules will be laid down under which municipal enterprise will be properly regulated in the future. I do not know whether it is possible to define a regular principle on which municipal enterprise should be carried out, but there are certain general lines on which such a Committee should go. It seems to me that there is one good example in the provision and supply of electricity. I am in favour of municipalities supplying gas, water, electric light, and various other things that they do at the present moment, but in regard to the supply of electric power, for which the municipalities seem to think that they have got certain prescriptive rights, the question of principle arises. I think there is nothing civic or communal in the supply of electric power. A few weeks ago there were Bills dealing with electric power before the House. I submitted a motion which was accepted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, the President of the Board of Trade, and others, that these Bills, being of great importance, should be submitted to a special Committee, and in order that that Committee should be perfectly impartial that it should be nominated by the Committee of Selection. The hon. Member for South Islington stated at the close of his speech that the corporations desired that an impartial Committee should be appointed. That is precisely my object, and I have to propose an Amendment to the motion. I move after the word "be" in the second line to insert the words "nominated by the Committee of Selection." The result of that will be that the object of my hon. friend below me and the hon. Member for South Islington will be attained.

MR. COHEN: We do not want a Committee whose Report we know beforehand by its very constitution. We want an impartial Committee. One of the remarkable features of this debate is that those hon. Members who are in favour of municipal trading—I confess I am not—are just those who are against the inquiry. This is not an inquiry that condemns municipal trading. It is an inquiry into the way in which municipal trading shall be conducted. If you want that inquiry to result in a Report that will inspire confidence, the Committee ought to be comprised of Members who have no previously formed opinions. I have the honour to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In line two, after the word 'be' to insert the words 'nominated by the Committee of Selection.'"—(*Lord Balcarres.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I have listened with great interest to the debate. One feature it seems to me is that the hon. Members who have spoken have been very much at cross purposes all the time. It has been discussed by some hon. Members as if it was an attempt by means of the appointment of a Select Committee to curb and confine municipalities from doing that which they have been accustomed to do for so many years, whereas my hon. friend the Member for Norwich, in his very strong and well argued speech in favour of the motion, went upon matters which really have nothing to do with the question

whether the municipalities of this country have acquired the habit of going beyond their proper function in trading and commercial enterprise. That is a separate question altogether, I would venture to point out, from all those points with which the hon. Baronet dealt. The question, for instance, which I suspect is uppermost—judging from the warmth of the allusion to it—in the minds of many hon. Members in this matter is the action of the London County Council, and it may be other corporations and municipalities, so far as I know, in employing their own workmen instead of employing contractors. This Committee has no power to go into such a matter at all. That is a pure matter of administration and discretion on the part of the London County Council, whereas the motion deals with a proposal to appoint a Committee "to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction," so that I think the interesting catalogue of objects which my hon. friend the Member for South Islington read so much to the amusement of the House, and which we must imagine—I think it is no great stretch of imagination—represents the scraping up by those who originally advocated the idea of this Committee of every possible case that could throw discredit on municipal enterprise, while all the matters in the list, so far as I could gather them, which were of a doubtful character, do not come within the terms of this reference. The provision of cold air storage, the making of saddlery, and many other things which sounded rather odd when one first heard of them, have nothing whatever to do with the powers for industrial enterprise within or without the area of municipal jurisdiction. I come to the hon. Member for Norwich, who complains, with all the authority he rightly possesses on such a subject, on the part of Chairmen of Private Bills Committees that they are bewildered by not having any proper guidance in the decisions they are expected to give in regard to the proposals brought before them. It seems to me that what he wanted, rather, was some alteration of the Standing Orders which prohibit him under present circumstances from giving that expansion to municipal enterprise he wanted to give. He mentioned the piteous case of some borough that wished to extend a tramway into the adjoining country, and because their own boundaries and the outside tramway did not join it was beyond their power. There is no necessity for this pompous proceeding of a Joint Committee of the two Houses to determine that that is not common sense, and an application to the House to alter the Standing Orders would be successful. The hon. Member also spoke of the difficulty of fixing the precise number of years for the repayment of loans where electric lighting is concerned. I believe it is a fact that that uncertainty is a part of the necessity of the case where you are dealing with entirely new and experimental enterprises. There are very few electrical engineers of standing who will say how long electrical machinery can be expected to last. That being so, even a duplicate Committee of this kind cannot determine the number of years that ought to be fixed. All these proposals that come before the House are properly dealt with by the Committees we provide. Every one must be judged on its merits according to the circumstances of the locality, and for the protection of the ratepayers and the locality we are surely justified in trusting to the good sense and the justice of the ratepayers themselves. If they find a municipality playing ducks and drakes with their funds, and launching into expenditure, they will very soon call them to account. For my part I do not see any good this Committee is to do. As I say, we look first of all to the intelligence of the electors themselves. Then there is this House bound to see that justice is done to all interests, and I do not think that the appointment of a Committee like this for the purpose of giving us a guide and laying down a rule we are to follow is at all the way to keep that sense of responsibility which this House ought to entertain in these matters. Either the decision or the advice of this Committee would have an effect or it would not. If it had no effect, which would probably be the result, what would be the use of appointing it? I have only one other observation which I would venture to bring before the House, and it is of so unpleasant a character that I hesitate a little even to refer to it. This House is not so young as it once was, and after all we cannot forget the fact that we have

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

lived Parliamentarily for several years. Is it desirable, if this is to be a great new departure, and the enterprises of the municipalities throughout the country are to be regulated by a formal tribunal according to some fixed principles, that we should at this particular period of Parliament, undertake this work? Would it not be much better to relegate it when it can be done, if it is to be done at all, to a new Parliament, who have had the opportunity of ascertaining by the pleasant means of a general election what the general feeling of the country in the matter is? These are the considerations which lead me one after another to think that this Committee had better not be appointed. I do not know exactly why the Government work themselves up to something approaching zeal and earnestness in favour of this Committee. It is done in a very charming way, no doubt, but in a way that rather startles one when we see that that which was last session kicked about with little respect—I think it was called no man's child, and no one was responsible for its coming to an ignominious end at the close of the session—is now revived with all the authority of the Government, and the twelve o'clock rule is suspended so that the country should not miss this great opportunity. I join in the hope expressed, I think, by the hon. Member for South Islington, and others, that if the Committee is appointed it will do no harm. That is the best we can say, because nothing could be worse than anything that would look like a desire on the part of this House to be jealous or suspicious of the municipal zeal that exists so much to the benefit and advantage of the country in all our towns, great and small. The hon. Member for Norwich spoke of the great development of municipal enterprise of late years. Will not the word "electricity" account for the greater part of it? If electricity is being applied to both lighting and traction, in that itself you have the reason for half the schemes brought forward. It is no use appealing to the Government after suspending the Twelve o'clock Rule. They have, as it were, burned their boats, and they must go on; but I will vote against the motion, and I hope if the Committee does no good it will do no harm.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 67. (Division List No. 98.)

AYES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt Hn A H Smith-(Hunts
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M H. (Bristol
Bethell, Commander
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worcester
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St Geo.'s
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Henry
Houston, R. P.
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. Edw. H.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milward, Colonel Victor
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)

More, Robt. Jasper (Shropsh.)
Morton, Arthur H. A (Deptford)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Rutherford, John
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Thomas
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Alston
Colville, John
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Emmott, Alfred.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffiths, Ellis J.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh'e
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Arthur, Wm. (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
Maddison, Fred.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
Oldroyd, Mark
Palmer, G. Wm. (Reading)
Reckitt, Harold James
Runciman, Walter
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Steadman, William Charles
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.
Wilson, H. J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Goddard.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of five Members of this House, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath appointed a Committee of five Members to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction; and to request that their Lordships will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of this House.—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

POLICE RESERVISTS (ALLOWANCES) BILL.

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

BEER RETAILERS' AND SPIRIT GROCERS' LICENCES (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

LONDON GOVERNMENT (BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH ORDER IN COUNCIL).

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith), in moving an Address praying Her

Majesty to withhold Her Assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Hammersmith, stated that the boundaries proposed by the Commissioners were not convenient boundaries. It was true that one of the regulations for the guidance of the Commissioners was that boundaries were to be in the centre of streets, but if that instruction was to be followed they might have selected a better street than the one they had taken. The people of Hammersmith merely wanted a good boundary. It was not a question of rating between Hammersmith and Kensington. Both of these places originally agreed on a boundary, but the Commissioners would not have it.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) seconded the motion. The draft Order provided that certified copies of the maps of the district required to be produced in evidence should be obtained from the clerk of the County Council, whose offices were near Charing Cross. It was to be presumed that the persons requiring the maps would find it more convenient to obtain copies of the maps at the Vestry Hall, and that was one reason for the proposal to substitute the words, "Town Clerk of the borough" for "Clerk of the county council," apart from any question as to maintaining the dignity of the new boroughs.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her Assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th day of March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Hammersmith, the incorporation thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith, unless Amendments are made therein (1) to omit so much of sub-paragraphs (a) and (c) of Clause 3 as relates to the Nos. 2, 3, and 5 on the map described in the Draft Order, so as to exclude that portion of the parish of St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington, as is coloured red on the said map, and to retain in the new Borough of Hammersmith all now belonging to the said borough, except the portion to be transferred to carry out the boundary mutually agreed upon by the Vestries of the Parishes of Hammersmith and St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington; and (2) to substitute the words 'Town Clerk of the Borough' for the words 'Clerk of the County Council' throughout Clause 3, Sub-section (4)."—(*General Goldsworthy.*)

MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.): I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, to be obliged to oppose the motion of my honourable and gallant friend the Member for Hammersmith, as regards the boundary between Hammersmith and Kensington. It is true that, under the scheme approved of by the two parishes, Kensington would have surrendered a rateable value of £242, and that the Commissioners have slightly altered the line with an advantage to Kensington of £570 rateable value. The statements of the Hammersmith Vestry that the Commissioners' adjustment is materially different from the old one, and is unjust to Hammersmith as transferring to that borough property of a much inferior class, in an insanitary condition, with a congested low class population, and with roads in a bad state of repair, are, I am instructed to say, either exaggerated or incorrect. It was recognised by the vestries of both parishes that the old boundary between Bramley road and Silchester road could not be perpetuated and no adjustment could be agreed on. But as the conclusions of the Commissioners show that the representations of the two vestries received careful consideration, and were only departed from in order to uphold a general rule laid down for the metropolis as regards boundaries along streets, the parish of Kensington accepted the decision, and I therefore appeal to the House to reject the motion of my hon. and gallant friend.

*EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.) also opposed the motion. There might be an impression in the House that Kensington was acting a selfish part in the matter. Of course that was not so. At the time of the inquiry the two parishes put forward a joint scheme which, if approved, would have resulted in a pecuniary loss to Kensington.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said the Commissioners in their Report stated that they found the existing boundaries as bad as they could be. The Commissioners substituted for an inconvenient

boundary one which was in almost all cases a road or street. He could not pretend to the same local knowledge as his hon. and gallant friend, but the senior Commissioner and his assistant had reported on the matter, and he had looked into it as far as it was possible for him to do so, and he was bound to say that the present boundaries seemed to him to be infinitely better than those that existed before. The Commissioners were absolutely impartial men, with no object whatever except to arrive at the best and most fitting solution of the matter. With regard to the question as to who should certify the maps, there was, he thought, something to be said; but to substitute "town clerk" for "clerk of the county council" would altogether destroy the Order, and it would be necessary to produce another Order to lie on the Table for thirty days. As soon as the present Order was confirmed by Parliament, these schemes would have to be made. Under these schemes the town clerk might be added to the clerk of the county council for the purpose suggested. He would inquire into this subject more fully and ascertain what could be done without injury or prejudice to the purposes of the Order.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LONDON GOVERNMENT (BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON ORDER IN COUNCIL).

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT, in moving an Address, praying Her Majesty to withhold her assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th day of March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Islington, said he thought the arrangement proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was in the circumstances satisfactory. But he found that the maps attached to these Orders were too small, and the result was that very expensive litigation had at times to be carried on as to liability for repair of sewers, roads, and the like.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) seconded the resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her Assent to the Draft Order in Council of the 13th day of March, 1900, for the establishment of the Metropolitan Borough of Islington, the incorporation thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith, unless amendments are made therein (1) to substitute the words 'Town Clerk of the Borough' for the words 'Clerk of the County Council' throughout Clause 3, Sub-section (4), and to substitute the word 'Borough' for 'County' in the last line of such sub-section; (2) to enlarge the scale of the maps referred to in the Draft Note, or to attach an itinerary to such maps, so that the dotted line indicating the boundary may enable it to be ascertained by measurement or description on which side of the boundary sewers, gas mains, water mains, electric mains, and the like are situated, and to facilitate many other purposes connected with local government."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

MR. CHAPLIN said there were no maps made on a larger scale anywhere. He could not conceive any purpose for which these maps were not altogether sufficient.

MR. COHEN thought they might be contented with what the right hon. Gentleman had said about the maps.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Adjourned at five minutes before One of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 6th April, 1900.

APPEAL COMMITTEE.

First Report from; read, and agreed to.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Mendip (*V. Clifden*) sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

Airdrie, Coatbridge, and District Water Trust.
Cheshire Lines Committee.
Great Eastern Railway.
Spalding Urban District Council (Water).

The same were ordered to lie upon the Table.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD CORPORATION (WATER) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

IPSWICH CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Reported with Amendments.

PONTEFRACT PARK BILL.

Reported without Amendment.

WALSALL CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].
SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.] and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Walsall Corporation Bill [H.L.] and the South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].
NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL [H.L.].

The order made on Tuesday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged.

HARTLEPOOL GAS AND WATER BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

SOUTHPORT EXTENSION AND TRAMWAYS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.
CITY AND SOUTH LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed.

GLASGOW DISTRICT TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to order).

RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY BILL [H.L.].
MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL [H.L.].
MOUNTAIN ASH WATER BILL [H.L.].
BURNLEY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].
EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].
BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].
BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY BILL [H.L.].
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES GAS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

GREAT YARMOUTH PORT AND HAVEN BILL.
READING CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS) BILL.
SOUTHPORT WATER BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) AMALGAMATION BILLS.

Message from the Commons that they concur in the Resolution of this House communicated to them on the 30th of March last, that it is desirable that the

Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Central Ireland Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.], the Great Southern and Western and Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Companies Amalgamation Bill [H.L.], and the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Bill [H.L.], be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament as desired by this House.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

CLONTARF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee, to consist of Four Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider the said Bills, and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS).

Minute, dated 6th April, 1900, establishing higher elementary schools.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Proclamation issued by the High Commissioner for South Africa, on 19th March, 1900, relating to alienations of property by the Government of the South African Republic or of the Orange Free State made subsequently to the date of the Proclamation.

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT NEW HARBOUR WORKS, DOVER).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by Captain M. B. Lloyd, Her Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of gunpowder on the works of the New Admiralty Harbour at East Cliff, near Dover, on the 14th January, 1900.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, under the provisions of the Acts 27th and 28th Victoria, chap. 43, 45th and 46th Victoria, chap. 51, and 50th and 51st Victoria, chap. 40, and of the disposal thereof, and of the contracts made, for the year ended 31st December, 1899. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee, to consist of five Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider and report as to the principles which should govern powers given by Bills and Provisional Orders to municipal and other local authorities for industrial enterprise within or without the area of their jurisdiction, and to request that this House appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the fourth and fifth sections of this Bill introduce two Amendments of the Army (Annual) Act of 1881. Under the present regulations a soldier can only extend his engagement so as to complete the period of twelve years altogether. Now, your Lordships are aware that we have lately, as an emergency measure, enlisted a very considerable number of men in Reserve battalions upon a one year engagement. It is quite likely that some of these men may desire to extend their period of service. Under the law as it stands they can only extend it so as to complete the full period of twelve years; that is to say, a man having engaged for one year can only extend so as to complete the full period of twelve years. We think it likely that many of these men may desire to extend for a shorter term, and an Amendment is introduced authorising extensions of service for a shorter period than the full twelve years. The other Amendment is of a comparatively trivial character. There is a discrepancy between the 79th and the 161st Sections

of the Act. The 79th Section provides for the restoration by the Secretary of State of all or part of the service of a soldier which has been forfeited for desertion or fraudulent enlistment. Under the 161st Section the power of restoring service forfeited for fraudulent enlistment is apparently excluded. The object of the Amendment is to reconcile the two sections.

Moved, That the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

On Question, agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly; Committee negatived; Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.].
[THIRD READING.]

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

LORD WINDSOR: I have just had a communication from the Charity Commissioners stating that they adhere to their objection to Sub-section 2 of Clause 5, and they desire that it should be omitted. As I have not been able to print any Amendment, I imagine that I must postpone the Third Reading of the Bill. The Amendment would also entail the omission from the schedule of Section 16 of the Public Libraries Act, 1892, which I wished to repeal, because Clause 5 of this Bill practically transferred the powers given to the Charity Commissioners under the Act of 1892. I must ask the House to allow me to postpone the Third Reading of the Bill till Monday next at 12.30.

Third Reading (by leave of the House) put off to Monday next.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

YESTERDAY'S ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

On the motion that the House adjourn during pleasure—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I would like to refer to an absurd statement that appeared in the newspapers with regard to the business last night. It is said that the Prime Minister and myself, being engaged in conversation, forgot there was any public business to be done. The entire statement is a fiction. There was no public business to be done, and the House adjourned in the ordinary way.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed by the Earl of Morley.

FINANCE BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be read 2ª on Monday next (the Marquess of Salisbury); and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

POLICE RESERVISTS (ALLOWANCES) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 50.)

House adjourned at Eleven of the Clock, to Monday next half-past Twelve of the Clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 6th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE TRAMWAYS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed.

WIDNES AND RUNCORN BRIDGE BILL.

Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed.

HASTINGS TRAMWAYS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

HUDDERSFIELD CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

As amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

WOLVERHAMPTON, ESSINGTON, AND CANNOCK CHASE JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

MANCHESTER AND LIVERPOOL ELECTRIC EXPRESS RAILWAY BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bredbury and Romiley, Bridlington, Cheadle and Gatley, Hebburn, Kendal, Long Eaton, Lytham, Ormesby, Sleaford, and Tunstall (with Goldenhill and Chell), ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bredbury and Romiley, Bridlington, Cheadle and Gatley, Hebburn, Kendal, Long Eaton, Lytham, Ormesby, Sleaford, and Tunstall (with Goldenhill and Chell)," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 171.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5).

Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop Auckland, Caterham (with Warlingham), Cowpen, Grantham, Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton, Ogmore Valley, Redruth, St. Helens (Isle of Wight), South Blyth, and Weybridge, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ritchie and Mr. Hanbury.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bishop Auckland, Caterham (with Warlingham), Cowpen, Grantham, Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton, Ogmore Valley, Redruth, St. Helens (Isle of Wight), South Blyth, and Weybrid presented, and read the first time; t referred to the Examiners of Petit for Private Bills, and to be printed. [172.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIO ORDERS (No. 3).

Bill to confirm certain Provisi Orders of the Local Government B relating to Aberavon, Burslem, the (terfield Gas and Water Board Dis Colne, Fenton, and Kendal, ordered t brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell and Chaplin.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIO ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional O of the Local Government Board rel to Aberavon, Burslem, the Chester Gas and Water Board District, C Fenton, and Kendal," presented, and the first time; to be referred to Examiners of Petitions for Private and to be printed. [Bill 173]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIO ORDERS (No. 4).

Bill to confirm certain Provisi Orders of the Local Government B relating to Barnsley (Rural), Feathers Hambledon (Rural), Lutterworth (Ru Ossett (Rural), St. Helens, Wigan, the Wirral Joint Hospital Dist ordered to be brought in by Mr. T Russell and Mr. Chaplin.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIO ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

"To confirm certain Provisional O of the Local Government Board relati Barnsley (Rural), Featherstone, Ha don (Rural), Lutterworth (Rural), O (Rural), St. Helens, Wigan, and the W Joint Hospital District," presented, read the first time; to be referred to Examiners of Petitions for Private and to be printed. [Bill 174.]

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Mr. OLDROYD reported from the C mittee on Group B of Private Bills, the parties opposing the Gas Light Coke, Commercial Gas, and South M politan Gas Companies Bill had st that the evidence of Professor V Lewes was essential to their case; a having been proved that his attend could not be procured without the i

vention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Professor Vivian Lewes, of 18, Lower Whitecross Street, London, do attend the said Committee To-day, at Three of the clock.

Ordered, That Professor Vivian Lewes do attend the Committee on Group B of Private Bills this day, at Three of the clock.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

CITY OF LONDON (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

ABERDEEN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (SPITALFIELDS MARKET) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILL (GROUP A).

Sir WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills, That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 2nd May, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Colonial Bank Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Eastern District Committee of the County Council of the county of Stirling to construct waterworks and to supply water within their district; to authorise the County Council of the county of Stirling to acquire lands and servitudes for the purposes of such water supply; to authorise and require the said County Council to levy assessments and to borrow money; and for other purposes." East Stirlingshire Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Newport for the construction of a bridge over the River Usk, and of tramways and other works; and for other purposes." Newport Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Paignton Urban District Council to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes." Paignton Urban District Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company; and for other purposes." London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of the Urban District of Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn to supply gas, and to purchase the undertaking of the Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Gas and Coke Company, Limited; and for other purposes." Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Urban District Gas Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Company to stop up certain level crossings and substitute bridges; to divert and alter certain roads; to construct an aerial ropeway; to acquire additional lands; to consolidate their debenture stocks and amend their Act of 1888 as to the consolidation of preference stocks; to subscribe to the Bantry Bay Steamship Company, Limited; to confer further powers upon the Company; and for other purposes." Cork, Bandon, and South Coast Railway Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to empower the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to construct a pier at Valencia; to abstract water from the River Suir and lay pipes to their Thurles station; to acquire additional lands; to vest in the Company the undertaking of the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Light Railway Company; to subscribe further sums to the Southern Hotels, Limited; to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." Great Southern and Western Railway Bill [Lords].

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE WATER BILL [Lords].

NEWPORT CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

PAIGNTON URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [Lords].

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

NEWTOWN AND LLANLLWCHAIARN URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL [Lords].

CORK, BANDON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Auchterarder, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Liverpool, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LUNACY BILL.

Petition of the Metropolitan Relieving Officers' Association, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from West Kirby, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Coventry; London; Prestatyn; Wakefield; Hartlepool (two); West Hartlepool; and Blairgowrie; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Tynemouth; Uxbridge; Swansea; Swalwell; Sheffield (five); Willington-on-Tyne; Chester-le-Street; Sleaford; South Benwell; Cornwall; Meigle; and Wallasey; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Chester-le-Street; Messingham; East Butterwick; Sleaford; Wakefield; Cornwall; Swansea; and Bradford; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RIFLE RANGES.

Return presented, relative th [Address 12th March — *Mr. Ra Cooke*]; to lie upon the Table, and printed. [No. 129.]

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of all M received and of the disposal thereo of all Contracts for the grant of Def Life Annuities and for Payment Death made, during the year 189 Act]; to lie upon the Table, and printed. [No. 130.]

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Proclamation i by the High Commissioner for Africa on 19th March, 1900, relati Alienations of Property by the G ment of the South African Repub Orange Free State made subsequent the date of the Proclamation [by mand]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Minute o Board of Education, dated 6th 1900, establishing Higher Eleme Schools [by Command]; to lie up Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT.

Copies presented, of Minutes san ing the subjects to be taught Clause 8 of The Technical Instr Act, 1889, for the following count district:—

County of Buckingham (E Minute), dated 23rd Feb 1900;

District of Beckenham, dated March, 1900

[by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOE PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTO

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) behalf of the hon. Member for East I beg to ask the First Lord o Treasury whether he will state grounds on which it has been decid

remove General Cronje and a number of Boer prisoners to St. Helena; what is the legal sanction for keeping these men in custody in St. Helena: and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any correspondence which has passed between Mr. Schreiner and the High Commissioner, or with Her Majesty's Government, on this subject.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The grounds for the removal of the prisoners were based on the question of safe custody. I am not aware that any special legal sanction is required in removing them to St. Helena. No correspondence between Mr. Schreiner and the High Commissioner has as yet reached this country.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Mayo, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the number of cases of illness amongst the Boer prisoners in Simons Town, and the number of deaths; whether any inspection of the prisoners and their quarters has been made by independent medical men; and, if so, whether he will lay their reports upon the Table of the House; and why the Boer prisoners have been kept on board ship instead of being kept under conditions similar to those enjoyed by the British prisoners in the Transvaal.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The information asked for in the first paragraph was given in full detail by my hon. friend the Under Secretary yesterday.* We have no information about the second paragraph, but I may state to the House—what I am sure the hon. Gentleman is aware of already—that no distinction is drawn between Boer and Briton in the matter of medical treatment.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is there an abundance of pure spring water at Simons Town?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no reason to doubt that there is.

PRISONERS OF WAR—STATISTICS—SUGGESTED EXCHANGE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can give the number of prisoners of war held by the Transvaal and British forces respectively; and say whether, in the interest alike of the prisoners on both sides, the Government would consent to an exchange of prisoners.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The total of Transvaal and Orange Free State prisoners on the 23rd March was 5,000. The total of British prisoners cannot be accurately ascertained, but the total of missing and prisoners up to the 31st March was 3,466. It is not considered that the time has come for raising the question of an exchange of prisoners.

BOER PRISONERS AT SIMONS TOWN.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any instructions have been, or are to be, sent to the military authorities at Simons Town as to any change of treatment of the Boer prisoners which may become necessary owing to the outbreak of fever among the prisoners; and whether a portion or the whole of them can be transferred to quarters on the mainland; and what arrangements are being made at St. Helena for adequate medical treatment in case of further serious extension of fever among the prisoners to be transferred to St. Helena.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The Boer prisoners who are suffering from enteric fever have been transferred from the ships to quarters on shore. Every arrangement has been made for adequate medical treatment at St. Helena.

DURBAN NAVAL VOLUNTEERS.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what, if any, is the official relationship between the Durban Naval Volunteers and the Royal Navy; and whether this force has any recognised status under the Admiralty; and, if so, why the names of the officers of this force do not appear in the Navy List. I beg also to ask the First Lord whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that while General Buller's despatch, dated 17th December last, relating to the action fought the previous day, makes special mention of the admirable manner in which the naval guns were served by the

* See page 1254 of this volume.

Naval Brigade and Durban Naval Volunteers, under Captain E. P. Jones, Royal Navy, this officer in his despatch to the Admiral reporting in detail and at length proceedings on that occasion omits any mention of the Durban Naval Volunteers; and what is the explanation of this omission.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Volunteers in question, though called naval, are, it appears, trained as garrison artillery, and are practically for military rather than naval defence. They do not form part of the naval defences, and thus do not appear in the Navy List. I was glad to notice the paragraph in General Buller's despatch in which he refers to the good services rendered by these Volunteers, who were serving under the orders of the General Commanding in the Field. I cannot undertake to say why Captain Jones omitted any mention of these Volunteers in the Report alluded to. In a later Report he has referred to them as having been attached to 4·7-in. guns, and to the officers as being efficient.

LORD ROBERTS'S PROCLAMATION AGAINST LOOTING.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the terms of the Proclamation which Lord Roberts is understood to have issued under the instructions of Her Majesty's Government against wanton destruction of property in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The following are the terms of the Proclamation issued by Lord Roberts on 26th March:—"Whereas it is necessary that all State and private property in the South African Republic and Orange Free State shall be protected from wanton destruction and damage. Now therefore I hereby give notice that all persons who within the territories of the South African Republic or Orange Free State shall authorise or be guilty of the wanton destruction or damage, or the counselling, aiding, or assisting in the wanton destruction or damage of public or private property, such destruction or damage not being justified by the usages and customs of civilised warfare, will be held responsible in their persons and property for all such wanton destruction and damage."

WAR MEDALS.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, with regard to soldiers dying in South Africa in the course of the present campaign, who, if they had survived, would have been entitled to a medal, whether it is the custom of the War Office to forward such medals to the soldiers' next of kin; and whether this course of procedure will be adopted in the case of Volunteers and Colonial troops, and whether this custom is optional or is laid down in any of the Regulations for the Army.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir. The reply to both questions is in the affirmative. There are, however, considerable difficulties in tracing the relatives of colonial soldiers. The custom has always been followed, but has not hitherto been embodied in any Regulation. The new Queen's Regulations will contain directions on the subject.

ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the questions in the examination of officers of the Army Veterinary Department for promotion to the rank of veterinary lieutenant-colonel are both framed and also looked over by the Director General; and whether this is the only branch of the service in which an independent board is not assembled for the purpose of examination.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. The examinations are carried out by a board of veterinary officers.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Director General, Army Veterinary Department, forwards his recommendations for promotion to the War Office on the result of the examination; and whether he is aware that, at the last examination, no questions were asked on subjects connected with administrative duties, although it is laid down in the veterinary regulations that the questions should be chiefly based on administrative duties.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. As regards the last examination, my hon. and gallant friend has been misinformed; some of the questions dealt with important administrative subjects.

CAPTAIN JESSEL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to recent statements as to the loss of horses in South Africa owing to the insufficient number of Army veterinary surgeons employed, and that these officers are everywhere overworked and not able to attend to more than a small proportion of the cases of sickness; and whether any retired officers of the Department, who are still available for service through not having reached the age limit, have been employed either at home or in South Africa; if so, could he state the numbers employed at home and abroad, and also how many civilian veterinary surgeons are employed.

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have no information confirming the statement referred to in the first paragraph. In regard to the second paragraph, twelve retired veterinary officers are being employed. There are forty-six officers of the Army Veterinary Department in South Africa, five abroad assisting in the purchasing of animals, and thirteen at home. There are eighty-nine civilian veterinary surgeons in South Africa and nine abroad assisting in the purchase of animals. Twenty-one Yeomanry and Volunteer veterinary officers are also in South Africa.

MILITARY TRANSPORT—HAULAGE MACHINERY.

MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in view of the losses which have recently taken place in the animals of the transport service in South Africa, the War Office are providing any of the modern forms of steam or mechanical haulage engines, so as to test whether they can supplement or supersede animal haulage for military transport service.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The importance of mechanical haulage has not been lost sight of, and there are more than twenty traction engines now successfully employed on transport purposes in South Africa. Lord Roberts will consider to what extent additional means of traction of this character can be usefully adopted, regard being had to the nature of the country.

INDIAN ARMY CAMP FOLLOWERS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to state the result of his inquiries as to the camp followers in the late Indian frontier campaign having been deprived at the close of the campaign of the warm clothing issued to them; and whether, inasmuch as this clothing was sold for small sums, these men, many of whom are now serving in South Africa, will be allowed in future to retain it.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Government of India have reported that, under the rules in force during the frontier campaign of 1897-8, followers who served until the end of the campaign were allowed to retain their field service clothing, except leather belts, haversacks, water-bottles, and waterproof sheets. But for the future the Government of India have decided that they shall be allowed to retain their clothing, with the exception of leather belts and waterproof sheets only.

ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY AT THE FRONT.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty will he explain why the Royal Marine Artillery serving in Naval Brigades in South Africa are employed as infantry escorts to naval guns, for the service of which they have been specially trained.

MR. GOSCHEN: The responsibility for the distribution and allocation of the duties to be performed by the several sections of the forces in South Africa must rest with the officers, whether naval or military, who have to conduct the operations, and the Admiralty are not prepared to interfere with the arrangements made on the spot to meet the conditions of the moment.

MILITARY TRAINING—THE AUTUMN MANŒUVRES.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, seeing the importance of training troops for home defence upon enclosed and difficult country, the Government purpose taking immediate steps to obtain suitable ground for the training of small bodies of troops during the proposed manœuvres for the present year.

*MR. WYNDHAM: This question is now receiving careful consideration.

VOLUNTEER "WAITING COMPANIES."

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, having reference to Army Order 29, of 1900, paragraphs 14 and 15, men of Volunteer "waiting companies," who have been passed to the Reserve, are supernumerary to the establishment of their Volunteer battalions during the period prior to calling up for service and departure from England, or whether during such period they are to be included in such establishment; whether, with reference to paragraph 12a of the said Army Order, arms are to be issued to men of waiting companies when in waiting or only when called up for service; whether it is intended that Volunteer commanding officers should clothe and equip the men of waiting companies when called up for service; and whether it is intended that men of waiting companies should drill with the battalions until called up for service.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The waiting companies are not supernumerary to the establishment until actually called up. Like other Reservists, they will not have arms issued to them until called up; arms are lent to Reservists to do their drill or training. When called up they will be equipped in the same way as the service companies. As regards drill, they may be considered as Volunteers for all purposes and may drill with their battalions, but they incur the ordinary liabilities of a Reservist.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING GRANTS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether arrangements can be made whereby the special grant of two guineas will be allowed to any Volunteer battalion, one-half of the total strength of which are present in the camp at Aldershot or on Salisbury Plain for fourteen days by separate composite companies of over eighty rank and file each, attached for training with Regular troops; and whether, if this cannot be done, any special grant will be allowed per man; and whether, in any event, the actual cost of travelling to and from the camp of training will be allowed.

*MR. WYNDHAM: In view of the necessity of giving the Volunteers a training in battalions, and not in detached companies, the rules laid down in the Army Order must be adhered to. If there is anything in the circumstances of any particular corps to justify special treatment, application should be made by the commanding officer, through the general officer commanding the district, to the adjutant general.

VOLUNTEERS—POST OFFICE SERVANTS.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if the concessions granted to civil servants volunteering for the front in the way of granting them the difference between their pay and the cost of providing a substitute and handing it over to their dependent relatives at home, will also be extended to unmarried Army Reserve men called from the Postal service to rejoin their old regiments for active service.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The concession applies to the unmarried Army Reservists as well as to the Militia and Volunteers.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND VOLUNTEER TRAINING.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether those civil servants who, being Volunteers, respond to the invitation of the War Office and spend three or four weeks in camp will be obliged to count the whole period as part of their ordinary annual leave; or whether under the special circumstances they may be allowed not to deduct from their leave more than the usual period of

seven to ten days during which Volunteer regiments are normally encamped.

MR. HANBURY: Subject to the discretion of the heads of Departments, special leave will be given for the whole period that a Volunteer may spend in camp. Those spending a full month in camp will receive civil pay for half the time, and military pay for the remaining half. Those who spend less than a month will receive military pay only. Volunteers who prefer to take the whole or part of their ordinary leave in camp will receive full civil and military pay for the period corresponding to such ordinary leave, and for the remainder of the time spent in camp will receive half civil and half military pay if they spend a full month in camp, but military pay only if the period is less than a month.

RIFLE RANGES IN HEREFORDSHIRE.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that excellent rifle ranges exist at Leominster and Ross, in the county of Hereford; and whether any regiments of Regulars or Militia are to be sent to either of the above-mentioned places for training during the coming spring and summer.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Secretary of State is aware that there are excellent ranges there, but no regiments will be sent there this year, as the intention is to assemble the troops in large camps.

THE LATE FIELD MARSHAL SIR DONALD STEWART.

MR. FABER (York): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the remains of the late Field Marshal Sir Donald Stewart were transported in one of Her Majesty's ships from Algiers, where he died, to Gibraltar, for the purpose of being brought to England; and whether the coffin was disembarked at Gibraltar; and, if so, where was it deposited; and whether arrangements have been made for one of Her Majesty's ships to bring the body of the deceased Field Marshal to England.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; the remains of the late Field Marshal Sir Donald Stewart were carried by Her Majesty's ship "Juno" from Algiers to Gibraltar for the purpose of their conveyance to England by mail steamer. No information has reached the Admiralty with regard to the arrangements carried out by the military authorities in the reception and custody of the coffin. It was not considered advantageous for the public service to specially detach one of the ships of the Squadron to convey the body of the late Field Marshal to England, a question of a public funeral having, so far as I am aware, not been mooted.

SUBMARINE TORPEDO BOATS.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what steps, if any, are being taken with reference to submarine torpedo boats, seeing that other maritime countries are devoting increased attention to this question, and that America, after long experiment, is said to have an efficient boat of this type in the "Holland."

MR. GOSCHEN: Close attention has been given by the Admiralty to the subject of submarine boats. The submarine boat, even if the practical difficulties attending its use can be overcome, would seem, so far as the immediate future is concerned, to be essentially a weapon for maritime Powers on the defensive, and it is natural that those nations which anticipate holding that position should endeavour to develop it. The question of the best way of meeting its attack is receiving much consideration, and it is in this direction that practical suggestions would be valuable. It seems certain that the reply to this weapon must be looked for in other directions than in building submarine boats ourselves, for it is clear that one submarine boat cannot fight another.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, GREENWICH —NAVAL HISTORY LECTURES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty is there any lecturer on naval history at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich; and, if so, what salary or fee does he receive: and how many lectures on naval history have been given at the College in each of the last ten years, and does he propose to make any alteration in the arrangements for these lectures.

MR. GOSCHEN: Professor Laughton has been engaged to deliver eight lectures on naval history in the course

of the present session, for which he will receive fees at the rate of £5 a lecture. No such lectures were given between 1889 and 1899.

ENGINEER OFFICERS TO THE ACCOUNTANT BRANCH ROYAL NAVY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is in contemplation to extend the concessions recently granted to Engineer officers to the Accountant branch of the Royal Navy.

MR. GOSCHEN: I am unable at present to answer the question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman.

BRITISH GUIANA—BANK NOTE ISSUES.

MR. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies by whom and under what restrictions and conditions bank notes are issued in British Guiana, and whether those conditions have been complied with in all cases; and, if not, whether he will take steps to have them immediately enforced.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Bank notes are at present issued in British Guiana by the Colonial Bank (under Imperial Charter and Imperial Acts of Parliamant) and by the British Guiana Bank under certain local ordinances. The Colonial Bank may issue notes in British Guiana and the West Indies up to £500,000, or, if the Bill now before Parliament receives Her Majesty's assent, up to £600,000, and is required within six months from date of Act to deposit as security a sum in coin or securities equal to 25 per cent. of its note issue and to pledge its uncalled capital as further security. The British Guiana Bank under existing ordinances may issue notes to three times the value of its paid-up capital, without further restrictions. I have no reason to believe that these conditions have been infringed. A new ordinance for the British Guiana Bank is now under consideration.

CABLE COMMUNICATION WITH THE CAPE.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer will he explain on what grounds the offer to lay an all-British cable from England to Cape Town by Gibraltar and Sierra Leone for a subsidy of £20,000 a year, to connect with the Cape Town-Australia cable, to be laid without subsidy, has been refused by the Government, with the result of the cable now being taken by a route passing through two Portuguese stations; whether the company which made the offer was requested by the Government to lay, maintain, and work a strategic spur cable between Ascension and Sierra Leone at an estimated cost of £150,000, in consideration only of the Treasury finding it unnecessary to oppose the grant of landing rights in Cornwall at a spot where other cables of the same company are already landed with Board of Trade permission; and what precedent there is for refusing landing rights in the United Kingdom to British cable companies.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I cannot give a full answer to the first paragraph (which does not, I think, state the position quite accurately) without going into the history of negotiations, extending over several years and involving other questions besides this, between the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Cape, and Australia and the cable company. But I may say that one reason for refusing the subsidy of £20,000 a year was that another company had applied for landing rights for a cable to be laid by the all-British route without a subsidy. I think there is now ground for supposing that an all-British communication with the Cape will be obtained in another way. The statement in the second paragraph is correct. So far as I know, no steps have hitherto been taken by Government in this country to obtain any return from telegraph companies seeking landing rights; but the Cape Government have recently obtained substantial concessions as the price of landing rights for this new cable, and it seemed to me that the grant of new landing rights in this country was a valuable concession, for which it was my duty, in the public interest, to try and obtain in this and other instances some return in such a form as the circumstances might indicate to be most desirable.

BUDGET FIGURES—THE YEAR'S REVENUE.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the total revenue of the year

ending the 31st March, returned at £119,839,905, includes all the receipts of the last week of the year, or whether several items have been taken at the same amount as shown for the weeks up to and ending the 24th March; and whether the total revenue included for the week ending 31st March was only £1,626,000 against £4,124,000 in the week ending 24th March; and, if so, how he accounts for this difference.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The total of £119,839,905 includes all the receipts of the last week of the financial year just closed. Two consecutive weeks are not in the least comparable with one another. The receipts of the week ended 24th March included a payment into the Exchequer by the Post Office of 1¼ million, while in the following week there was no payment on that account. The receipts for the week ended 31st March, 1900, are more than the receipts of the corresponding week of the previous year, which were £1,217,000.

MR. LOUGH: Was there any payment whatever made through the Post Office or Telegraph service in the last week? Is it not true the last week is generally the largest week for payments?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir; it is not true.

MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICERS' CERTIFICATES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the chief officer of the steamship "Daniel" (which stranded at Mosquito Grove, Nova Scotia, on 1st November last), whose certificate was suspended by the Court of Inquiry for three months from 7th December, which three months expired on 7th March last, has been and still is unable to obtain the restoration of this certificate; whether the officer in question was entitled to have this certificate restored to him on 7th March; whether he has considered the hardship inflicted on this officer by the delay in returning his certificate, the effect of which is that, in addition to the enforced three months idleness caused by the sentence of the Court, he has been since 7th March and still is deprived through the want of his certificate from obtaining employment; whether the failure of the Board of Trade to return the certificate on the 7th March has arisen through delay arising in Canada, or through other causes beyond the control of the Board of Trade; if so, whether he will at once issue to this officer either a duplicate certificate or a provisional certificate such as will enable him to resume his calling; and whether he will consider what provision can be made for dealing with cases of a similar nature that may arise in future.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The facts of the case are as stated in the question, except that the certificate was suspended for three months from the commencement of the inquiry—namely, 27th November last. Although application was made to, and a promise given by, the Canadian authorities that the certificate should be sent to this country, it has not yet been received. In the meantime, in order to avoid any possible inconvenience, the Board of Trade issued instructions that the officer in question might be allowed to sign articles without producing his certificate. There is some objection to issuing duplicate or provisional certificates except in cases of great urgency; but, in all the circumstances of this case, I have given instructions for one to be at once issued to Mr. Milne, and I will consider whether any steps can be taken to avoid in future the delay that has arisen in Canada in this instance.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON SALMON FISHERIES.

SIR JAMES RANKIN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the Royal Commission on Salmon Fishery is finally appointed; and, if not, whether he would consider the advisability of appointing on that Commission a water engineer.

*MR. RITCHIE: The Commission has been appointed and has already met.

DOG LICENCES—CASE OF ARIES.

MR. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of a working man named Aries, who had taken into his house a dog which had been run over in the street and had its leg broken, and who after curing the dog in five weeks found a home for it, but was fined 10s.

and 2s. costs for not having a licence by the magistrate, who remarked that Aries should have turned the dog out; and whether he can see his way to recommend a modification of this sentence.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The Secretary of State is informed by the magistrate that the defendant stated that he had taken the dog in with a broken leg and had refused to take out a licence because he thought it hard on him to be required to do so, and that on being pressed to take out a licence he got rid of the dog, which gave rise to the remark of the magistrate that he should have got rid of it before. The humane intention of the defendant is not disputed, but the penalty was the smallest that could reasonably be imposed, and it does not seem to be a case for advising the remission of the penalty.

INSPECTORS OF TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS AT LIVERPOOL.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why, in the recent appointment of six inspectors of telegraph messengers at Liverpool, no fewer than fifty men, well qualified and of good character, in the postmen's department, were passed over.

MR. HANBURY: It is in contemplation to create six appointments to the class of inspectors of telegraph messengers at Liverpool. The duties are being performed temporarily by six postmen who have been selected as best qualified for them. As the appointments do not yet exist, the question of filling them by promotion has not arisen.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND FREE POSTAGE.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, having regard to the great and increasing expense entailed upon Members of the House of Commons in replying through the post to communications on political affairs, he can see his way to letters in envelopes embossed with the badge of the House of Commons, addressed and signed in the left lower corner in the handwriting of a Member, and handed in by him at the post office in the Lobby, whilst the House is sitting, being stamped "Official Paid," as in public offices, and thus passing post free throughout the United Kingdom.

MR. HANBURY: My hon. and gallant friend's suggestion goes a good deal beyond the practice of the public offices which he quotes. Letters sent out from the public Departments only pass free when they refer to the public business of the Department. The privilege of franking which Members of both Houses had previously enjoyed was expressly abolished by Act of Parliament in 1840. There is nothing in my hon. friend's suggestion which would obviate the undoubted abuses to which such a system is necessarily liable.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF POSTAL ORGANISATIONS.

MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to a memorial, dated 16th February, 1900, and signed by Messrs. Lickford, Ray, Nevill, and Smith, officially docketed Mem. 1/6/288, in which it was intimated to these officers that the Postmaster General declined to receive them on the grounds that they did not appear to be directly interested in the matter on which they desired to be recived as a deputation; whether the Postmaster General was aware that these officers are now in the service, and were representatives of the Sorters' Trade Union (the Fawcett Association), duly elected for the purpose of the interview in question; and whether such refusal is not at variance with the assurance given by the Postmaster General in the official document known as Registered No. 234,768/99, which states that in future he would receive delegates of Postal Trade Unions, provided they were in the service of the Post Office.

MR. HANBURY: The course adopted was strictly in accordance with the recent assurance given by the Postmaster General. Deputations must consist only of those who are themselves affected by the question at issue.

BOARD OF EDUCATION—DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education when the Report of the Departmental Committee regarding the work of the Board of Education will be presented to Parliament.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I am sorry I cannot answer the question to-day, as my noble friend the President of the Council is in attendance on the Queen.

MR. BRYCE: May I take it that the Report will be presented?

SIR J. GORST: I cannot say without consulting my noble friend.

LORD BALCARRES: Has the final Report yet been finished?

SIR J. GORST: Yes, it has.

MONAGHAN POST OFFICE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, has the tender of a suitable site for the erection of the proposed new post office in Monaghan been received by the Department; and, if so, will it be accepted; and when may the erection of the new building be expected to commence.

MR. HANBURY: Several offers of sites have been received and are under consideration; but it cannot yet be said whether any of them are suitable.

BELFAST TELEGRAPH OFFICE—MANTURIN'S CASE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, will he explain why a telegraphist in the Belfast office named Manturin has been stopped at the efficiency barrier, and why, seeing that on his appeal to the secretary it was decided that he should have opportunities for attaining proficiency in several duties which had previously been denied him, the local authorities have since made a practice of placing him upon the hardest instrument duties in the Belfast office; and whether the Postmaster General will investigate the circumstances of this case.

MR. HANBURY: The reason why Mr. Manturin could not pass the efficiency bar was that he was unable to perform the highest duties of his class—a condition specially prescribed by the Tweedmouth Committee. No further report has been received concerning him, and the question of his ability to pass the bar would not—under the regulations—be again considered until twelve months from the previous report—namely, in August next.

COMPENSATION TO INJURED IRISH POLICEMEN.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether it is in the discretion of the Treasury to compensate policemen who may be injured when on duty; and, if so, why are Irish ratepayers saddled with a burden in this respect which is not cast upon English ratepayers.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Every policeman injured in the discharge of his duty is entitled, irrespective of the length of his service, to a pension, the amount of which is determined by the Treasury according to the character and degree of the injury, in conformity with the scale prescribed by the Act 46 and 47 Vict., cap. 14. As regards the second part of the question, the reason why Irish ratepayers are liable to pay compensation in such cases is that an Act of Parliament, sixty-four years old, expressly re-enacted in the year 1898, and extended at the suggestion of several Nationalist Members to Belfast and Dublin, makes them so liable.

EVICTED FARM AT ERRIGAL TRUAGH.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that much excitement has been caused in the parish of Errigal Truagh by the alleged renting by the Protestant rector of that parish, as a site for a national school, of a portion of an evicted farm; and whether application has been made to the Commissioners of National Education, or any of them, for the customary grant and sanction for the erection and maintenance of this proposed school, and are the Commissioners aware that the site chosen is on an evicted

farm; and, if so, what reply have they given to the application.

MR. ATKINSON: The police report that Lord Rathdonnell has given to the Protestant rector of this parish a free site on an evicted farm for the erection of a Protestant national school. This has caused some irritation not amongst the Protestants, but apparently amongst those who have either entered into an illegal or possibly criminal conspiracy to boycott this evicted farm, or who approve of the action of such a conspiracy, and is, it would seem, due to the apprehension that the rector and Commissioners will act in such a way as to defeat to some extent the object of the conspiracy. The Commissioners report that the usual application has been made, but they have no information as to whether the farm is boycotted or not. They have not yet replied, but it is to be presumed that they will take such action as becomes public officials of the State in such circumstances.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: What steps has the right hon. Gentleman taken to satisfy himself that this is a criminal conspiracy?

MR. ATKINSON: I take it from the police report that it is a conspiracy to prevent by intimidation the exercise of a legal right.

BELFAST POOR LAW MEDICAL OFFICER.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that the medical officer of health under the poor law guardians of Belfast Union is an alderman of the Belfast County Borough, and in the latter capacity is also a member of the board having control over the asylum management; and is it consistent with the rules of the Local Government Board that officers of the ratepayers in any capacity in receipt of salary should be permitted to act as honorary representatives of the same ratepayers, and take an active part in advocating and supporting increase of official salaries.

MR. ATKINSON: The facts appear to be correctly stated in the first paragraph. As regards the second paragraph, the gentleman in question being a paid officer of the board of guardians would seem to be disqualified by the terms of the Local Government Board's Order of the 17th January, 1899, but the question is one to be decided in a court of law upon the validity and construction of the Order, and is not a matter for the decision of the Executive.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what will be the business before the House during the first few days after Easter. Perhaps I may ask a further question with regard to one of the motions standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman. I presume that when he refers to the "Proceedings on the Agricultural Holdings Bill" he meant the proceedings on Monday only. The motion does not say so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is correct in supposing that the notice refers to what we do on Monday. We propose before separating for the Easter recess to take the Second Reading of that Bill, and to refer it to the Grand Committee. With regard to the question on the Paper, I may say we hope to be able on Thursday, the 26th, to take the Votes in Class 3, and on Friday, the 27th, the Revenue Department Votes. In the unavoidable absence of the Home Secretary I cannot give a definite pledge as to Class 3.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: And as to the following Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can say nothing as to that. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will ask again on Monday next.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Will the Revenue Department Votes include the Post Office?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I presume the right hon. Gentleman will not take the Irish Estimates without due notice to the Irish Members, and that at any rate during the first few days after the holidays he will not take either of the two Bills—the Tithes Bill and the Charitable Loans Bill—in which the hon. Member for East Mayo takes interest.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman also undertake not to put down the Undersized Fish Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that Bill has wholly disappeared, and that in its place we have another Bill, called the Sea Fisheries Bill. I am afraid I cannot enter into the pledge asked for by my hon. friend, for there is a limit to the number of pledges I am able to give. In reply to the hon. Member for Waterford, I may say I shall certainly desire to consult the convenience of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland with regard to the day on which Irish Estimates are to be taken. The two Bills to which he referred will certainly not be put down until the Monday after the holidays.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): Will the right hon. Gentleman extend the same consideration to Scotch Members with regard to the Votes in Class 3?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am always glad to consult the convenience of Members from both Ireland and Scotland, and if hon. Members object to the Scottish Votes being taken immediately after the holidays, I will accede to their wish.

RAILWAYS (PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS) [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the remuneration of any persons employed by the Board of Trade, under any Act of the present Session for the better Prevention of Accidents on Railways, and of the Expenses incurred by the Board under such Act (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next. — (*Sir William Walrond.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the other Government business have precedence this day of the Committee of Supply. — (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*).

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (EASTER).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House at its rising on Monday do adjourn till Thursday, 26th April, and that at the conclusion of the proceedings on the Agricultural Holdings Bill Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—TERMS OF SETTLEMENT—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS—MARTIAL LAW—CHARGES AGAINST BRITISH TROOPS.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): The motion just moved by my right hon. friend covers an unusually long period of time, for the House is about to separate under circumstances of a very serious and even unprecedented character. It appears to me, therefore, that the time is not unfitting to enter into a discussion, which may be conducted without exciting heat or feeling or party passion, on the situation in South Africa, and on the possible conditions under which the war may be brought to a close. ["Oh!"] I am quite aware, from the sounds that are being emitted around me, that there are dangers attending such a discussion. I should not have proposed to enter upon it without very grave consideration, and I hope I shall conduct it in a manner not to prejudice any of the interests of the country, and not to excite any feeling derogatory to the traditions and character of the House. I am well aware of the perils of the subject. I should have thought that in the present situation anyone who is conscious of the dignity and responsibilities of Parliament and his own position as a Member of Parliament would not have thought it unbecoming to have entered on a discussion such as that which I have described. But I find I am debarred from entering on the main purpose of the speech which I had contemplated delivering to the House. An hon. Member in the exercise of his privileges has put down a motion for an Address to the Crown praying that no conditions of peace shall be agreed upon which do not satisfy certain conditions set forth in the notice. The notice was given for an early but indefinite day, and probably I am not very far wrong in thinking the hon. Member was not very eager to bring it on. At any rate, the result is that even the House itself, if it desires by a majority beyond computation to enter on the discussion of this subject, which must be admitted to be one of paramount importance, is absolutely debarred from considering the question. The notice of motion prevents attention being called to the subject on any day of this session, and this deprives hon. Members

of an opportunity of fulfilling the duty they are sent here to perform. It is especially unfortunate that this should happen at the present time, when this House is regarded as the single refuge where free speech can be possibly relied upon. The press is in great measure closed—["No!"]—the fact cannot be denied—to the minority, in some places a considerable minority, who hold views which are opposed to those of the majority. The power of assembly in public halls even for private discussion after notice given is practically interfered with and taken away in many parts of the country. It becomes of all the greater importance, therefore, that in this House the privilege of free speech should be maintained—that the House should not be debarred from the possibility of expressing its opinion on the most important question of the day. I have nothing to do but to submit; but I am not sorry that attention should thus be called to what has frequently been described by the right hon. Member for Thanet as "an injurious exercise of the irresponsible power of a single Member." There are, however, two matters of subsidiary importance on which I will crave leave to speak for a few minutes. One has been the subject of a question and answer to-day, and I will say at the outset I was rejoiced to hear the answer given by the Under Secretary for War with respect to the treatment of sick Boer prisoners. I am sure nobody wishes to add to the horrors of the war which is being waged in South Africa by any unnecessary infliction of sickness on the unfortunate prisoners who have fallen into our hands. It is not surprising they should develop a great amount of fever, especially enteric fever. Those who have realised the horrible pit in which Cronje and his men were placed before they were driven at last to surrender, and who understand the conditions of life to which they are accustomed, cannot be surprised to find that a large number of the prisoners who were brought down to Cape Town are suffering from fever. But they have been dying of late at a rate which will become serious if the present conditions are permitted to be maintained. I am, therefore, glad to hear from the Under Secretary that steps have been taken to prevent the further development of the sickness. So far as I know, no sickness has arisen among our own prisoners at Pretoria or elsewhere, though comparisons have been made between the treatment of colonial prisoners and the treatment of prisoners belonging to the Regular Army. Those comparisons do not seem to me of great importance, but they have been made. But there has been no suggestion whatever as to neglect being in any way found in the treatment of our prisoners. On the contrary, there is very considerable evidence to show that care and kind attention has been paid to their wants. My hon. friend has treated the cases among the Boers as cases of enteric fever only, but everyone knows how easy it is for fevers which are infectious to be confounded with those which are not. I assume that the greatest precautions have been taken to prevent any such confusion, and I hope that before the prisoners are landed care will be taken to see that no other infectious disease is developing itself. The other subject to which I wish to call attention is one in which, perhaps, there is not the same spontaneous interest which has been developed in the case of the sick prisoners; I refer to what has been done in the northern portion of Cape Colony and the colony of Natal in the way of the proclamation of martial law and the action thereunder. Very little is known as to what martial law is. One of the highest authorities, the late Lord Chief Justice, in a celebrated charge, practically declared that there was no such thing, that it was a negation of the law, which cannot be recognised as law at all. Of course, I am not prepared to deny that necessity might arise for action which might be roughly described as putting martial law in force, but I would suggest with reference to what is taking place in South Africa that the zone within which it should have force should be very largely decreased. It surely cannot be necessary for the assistance of the army in the field that martial law shall be carried down to Durban. The extension of the zone of martial law, an extension into which it is easy for an Administration to lapse, ought to be watched with the greatest jealousy. There is some reason to fear that the steps taken under martial law have not always been carefully instituted. There is the case in which three farmers were arrested in a district near the seat of war. They were taken to Cape Town, and there application was made to the court on their behalf, and after that application

had been made they were moved back into the district into which they were arrested and in which martial law had been proclaimed, so as to escape from the jurisdiction of the civil court. The farmers have since been released, but I must say that the spirit which animated the military authorities in taking these men from Cape Town to the seat of war after an inquiry had been ordered by the High Court must be condemned. These men were in custody for a considerable period, and in the end they were discharged, because there was no evidence against them. And that case does not stand alone. A gentleman in Kimberley was kept in custody for three months and then discharged because there was no evidence against him. We all have experience of the way in which prisoners get lost sight of. The late Mr. Roebuck once drew attention to the case of a man who had been in custody in Ireland for years, and whose case had been lost sight of. It requires great attention to prevent such abuses. In some cases, too, the punishment inflicted seems to have been excessive, the evidence against the prisoners being unsubstantial in character and resting entirely on two or three native servants, who produce nothing which would be admissible in a court of law. If the records are true, this is a matter which requires serious attention. I would suggest that care be taken that no one shall be detained under martial law beyond a short time without his case being inquired into, and that no sentence extending beyond a certain period shall be inflicted by a court constituted under martial law without its being subject automatically to revision by a court of civil jurisdiction. Some such safeguards as these would, I believe, be acceptable to the officers administering martial law, as likely to prevent the risk of injustice, to which they themselves would be the first to acknowledge they are liable. Now I come to another question. As everyone knows, there is a censorship established at the Cape. I have heard of perfectly innocent communications being stopped by the censor. A resolution arrived at by a committee here in Westminster was communicated to a gentleman in Cape Town. A committee with which I am not myself associated passed a resolution of sympathy with the Dutch in South Africa. It was sent out to Cape Town. Large sums were paid for the cost of transmission, and a fortnight afterwards the telegraph company returned the message to the person who sent it. [AN HON. MEMBER: A good thing, too.] It is the hon. Member's opinion that it is a good thing to prevent people in Westminster telling people in Cape Town that they have their sympathy. But is it a good thing that a message to a gentleman in Cape Town which involves no conceivable danger to the public interest should be stopped by the censor, the irresponsible censor? For to whom is the censor responsible? I have said all I have to say. I could have spoken at greater length if I had had the freedom I desired, but, under the operation of the rule to which I have referred, I have been stopped from pursuing a course which I believe I could have pursued without injury to the public interest.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Upon a point of order I desire to say that the notice of motion to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin has referred stands on the Order Paper in the name of the hon. and gallant Member for West Cumberland. In view of the fact, which is now notorious, that the hon. and gallant Member sailed from England more than a week ago for South Africa to engage in service at the front, I wish to know whether this notice of motion placed on the Paper by the hon. and gallant Member precludes this House from discussing certain phases of the war until he comes back. Suppose he never comes back at all. I assume that I am correct in saying that the House has power to order the discharge of a Bill, and I wish to ask if there is a similar power to order the discharge of a motion from the Order Book which is plainly there for blocking discussion and for a mischievous purpose, and which cannot be moved. The notice on the Paper is in the following terms—

"That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty not to make terms of peace with the Presidents of the South African Republics on any terms which do not provide for the annexation of the two Republics to Her Majesty's dominions."

I also wish to ask to what extent a motion of that kind can prevent debates in this House on the question of the settlement of this war.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I wish to ask whether it is not an ancient rule of this House that hon. Members who leave this country for a lengthened period have to obtain the leave of this House; and whether, on such leave being obtained, all the motions in their name do not necessarily lapse.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know of any such rule as that to which the hon. Member has just referred. It might, or it might not, be a reasonable course, but there is no rule to that effect. As regards the question of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kilkenny, I cannot take any notice of whether an hon. Member who has set down a notice of motion is in South Africa, or Scotland, or England. Then as regards the question which he asked me as to whether there is power in this House to discharge a notice of motion, I can only speak from precedent, and I am not aware that such power in a case like this has ever been exercised. I do not know whether the hon. Member can show me any precedent. As to the extent to which a debate is limited, I can only say that it is impossible for me to give an exhaustive definition beforehand. If an hon. Member trespass upon the ground covered by a notice of motion it is my duty to call him to order.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will it be open to me, in face of this motion, to argue that the British Government, in case they get the power to do so, ought to give back the independence of these States? Can I go that length?

*MR. SPEAKER: Certainly not.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I do not propose to enter into the questions which my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin has raised in the latter part of his speech, but I would ask the leave of the House to say a word on the subject which he dealt with at the commencement of his speech—the difficulties placed in the way of the action of this House by the rule, Mr. Speaker, which you have just laid down. I can give an example of the operation of this rule, as it happened when I was responsible for the conduct of the Opposition some years ago. There were then very serious questions affecting the policy of the Government in Crete, and I always, as I think the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House will acknowledge, abstained from bringing on a motion which might be detrimental to the public interest at that period and on this subject. I came to an understanding with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House that it was expedient and proper that that question should be brought on, by leave, on a motion for adjournment. With the consent of both sides of the House I came down to make that motion, and I found that there was a motion on the Paper, put down by the hon. Member for East Mayo, who wished the motion to come on, and who had no idea that his notice would obstruct it. He desired to withdraw the notice that day, but he was told that it was impossible, and the whole object of both sides of the House was defeated by the operation of this rule in a matter of very great public importance affecting the interests of the country generally. We had a discussion at that time upon the subject. I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House was as anxious as I was that the matter should come on, and we were absolutely defeated by the operation of a rule which, I venture to say, in the manner in which it operates, makes this House absolutely impotent. It may be that some very great public crisis has arisen, and there may happen to be, accidentally or intentionally, a notice of motion upon the Paper of this House, and though it may be the highest duty of the House to discuss that subject, though the Government desired it and the Opposition desired it, yet you have a rule which reduces you absolutely to impotence. A man may have a Bill introduced in the earliest days of the session without the smallest chance or intention of ever prosecuting it, and if that Bill refers to a subject which may be of the greatest possible importance, by no possibility can a motion be brought on in reference to that subject. Now, Sir, that is a situation which I think the House ought not to allow to continue. It does not depend upon any Standing Order of the House at all. It has grown up quite recently within my own memory. It was originally what may be called an *obiter*

* 1st March, 1897 (See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xlvi., page 1,347).

dictum of Mr. Speaker Peel,* and no doubt the original intention was to prevent a man, when there was a genuine motion intended to come on, and which should come on, from taking advantage of a motion for adjournment in order to anticipate that motion. It has now grown up into a totally different thing. It has grown up into a system of blocking public business, of excluding matters of the highest possible importance, and of making this assembly ridiculous. It leaves it in the power of any single man to defeat the whole House of Commons by the operation of this rule. The circumstances of to-day add to the ridicule, as was stated by the hon. Member behind me. A Member puts down a motion—I dare say in perfectly good faith. He goes abroad, and we may not see him again this session, or after this session, and yet by the mere fact of his having put down that motion on the Paper the whole question of the settlement of South Africa is excluded from the consideration of this House. It is intolerable that such an absurdity can be allowed to continue in the House of Commons. I know it has been called common law of the House of Commons, but it is common law of very recent origin, and though it was very good in its intention originally, it has been abused to such an extent that I think we ought to take notice of it. By resolution, at any moment, this practice can be abolished, and I do hope that some measure will be taken at a very early period to deliver the House of Commons from this ridiculous restraint upon its freedom of speech.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite is mistaken in speaking of this rule as a rule of the House. When the subject arose in connection with Crete a question was put to the Chair, I think by myself, as to whether it was in the power of a Member by putting down a motion of this kind to restrain the House from exercising the right which any Member possesses under Standing Order No. 17, to which the right hon. Gentleman just now referred—namely, in regard to motions for adjournment at the end of questions having precedence. I remember that the Leader of the House took part in that discussion. That was not a question of the rule of the House, but it was a ruling of the Chair in the time of your predecessor, which I am bound to say was a ruling in which a good many hon. Members of the House well versed in the usages of Parliament were not able to concur. I remember that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton cast some doubts upon that ruling. What took place upon the occasion I am now referring to was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire on the 1st of March, 1897, told the House that he found himself precluded from bringing on a motion for adjournment upon the question of Crete. I then asked the Leader of the House—

"Whether it would not be the more convenient course that the House should modify the Standing Order which applies to cases of this kind. Because I would remind my right hon. friend that I, for one, have a perfect right, if I think fit, to put down a notice on all fours with the notice of the hon. Member for Mayo, which would land the House in the same fix as to-day. Therefore, I venture to ask whether it would not be desirable that some modification of this rule should be adopted, whereby if, in the opinion of the Chair, any question arises which he considers of sufficient urgency, it might be brought forward, notwithstanding the interposition of any motion of the kind referred to."

The Leader of the House expressed sympathy with my suggestion, and went on to say—

"We have not in practice found that much difficulty arises, for the good sense of Members on both sides of the House has hitherto, in my experience, always prevented any such *impasse*, or such insuperable difficulty as in theory undoubtedly might arise at present, although in practice it has not arisen."

In reply to that I went on to say—

"I am afraid I cannot associate myself with my right hon. friend's experience as to no inconvenience having occurred in the past. I have known cases of considerable importance——"

* In *May's Parliamentary Practice* (Tenth Edition, page 264), references are given to many decisions on this point; but the earliest definite pronouncement under the present Rules of Procedure is not noted. On the 17th February, 1887 (see *The Parliamentary Debates* [Third Series], Vol. cccx., page 1,777), Mr. Speaker Peel gave a very distinct ruling, which he expressly founded on a ruling of his predecessor in 1882. The latter is reported in Vol. cclxxv. of the *Debates*, at page 26. Mr. Speaker Brand said: "An hon. Member is debarred from discussing on a Motion for adjournment a Motion which stands on the Order-book of the House." This, apparently, has no specific reference to the (then) new Rules, for Mr. Speaker Brand proceeds: "That is an established and fundamental Rule of Debate."

Here Mr. Speaker called me to order, as there was no question before the House, and I proceeded—

"I will then ask a question. Do I understand that my right hon. friend will take steps with a view to the modification of the rule, because, if not, I must consider whether another object lesson should not be forthcoming?"

Then, on another point of order, the Speaker said—

"The ordinary rule of the House is that when a motion such as that of the hon. Member has been put on the Paper it operates, so far as the question of anticipation goes, until it ceases to appear on the Paper."

Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton asked, on a question of order, whether there was any Standing Order of the House that laid down this rule, or whether it was not the practice that had grown up without any sanction from the House. The Speaker said, I think, "There is the Standing Order."

*MR. SPEAKER: It must be a misprint if the report states that I said, "There is a Standing Order." What I said was, "There is no Standing Order."

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I assume it must be a misprint. The Speaker then proceeds—

"It is a practice of the House which has been acted upon, and the practice of the House, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, when acted upon for years is as binding upon the House as a Standing Order."

Then the Speaker also proceeded to say—

"Of course it is obvious that there are occasions when the practice would operate inconveniently. It is not for me to say whether, on the whole, it operates inconveniently or not. Certainly if the House thinks fit to alter the rule I shall not offer any advice to the contrary."

Then I asked—

"What course can the House adopt? Would it be by way of resolution to move a modification, or by Standing Order?"

To which the Speaker replied—

"Where you want to alter the practice of the House, it would be more convenient to do so by Standing Order. At the same time, the House has sometimes acted upon resolutions. It is a matter for consideration what course should be followed."

Whereupon I said—

"As far as I am personally concerned, having regard to the assurance that the matter shall receive consideration, I shall not take action in the direction of an object lesson."

It was upon that distinct assurance that I refrained from putting on the Notice Paper that very night a motion which would stop throughout the whole of the session anything being said about Crete, and I shall be quite prepared to take the responsibility of putting down one of these sham blocking notices with a view to exposing the outrageous character of our system. It seems to me perfectly preposterous when a subject is brought forward which in the opinion of the speaker is a definite matter of urgent public importance, that the House should be precluded from discussing it because some individual Member who may be in South Africa or elsewhere had put down a motion, and that our privileges should be interfered with by an absurd system of this sort. I believe the original ruling to have been wrong. That is, of course, a matter with which I cannot deal now, but I venture to hope that my right hon. friend will give us an assurance that this matter shall be seriously considered by the Government, and that he will propose such a modification, whether by Standing Order or resolution, in the practice and procedure of this House as will restore to the House that freedom of debate it has always freely exercised.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The debate on the adjournment for the holidays has taken a somewhat unexpected turn owing to the difficulty in which my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin finds himself by being precluded by a motion on the Paper from making a speech he intended to deliver upon the terms of peace, or Lord Salisbury's message to the two Presidents, or some analogous subject. While I always listen to the right hon. Gentleman with the greatest pleasure, I am not sure that this is a very convenient time or a suitable occasion on which to discuss the settlement which will have to be made at the conclusion of the war, which, I am afraid, has some length to run before that happy termination is reached. Without going into the propriety of a discussion such as my right hon. friend wishes to initiate, I suppose the House desires that I should express an opinion on the more abstract and general question

which has arisen on the present occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth and my right hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet have, not for the first time, called attention to the inconvenience the House is put under by having its freedom of debate, so to speak, limited by its own rule or, at all events, by its own practice in this matter. I do not feel at all disposed to minimise that inconvenience, but at the same time I do not remember that in fact, during the last few years, it has produced any serious limitation of the power of debate. My right hon. friend has mentioned an instance, the only case apparently that occurs to his memory, in which a debate upon Cretan affairs was prevented from coming on on a certain afternoon. No doubt, at the time, the inconvenience was felt to be considerable, but no one who remembers the events of that session can assert that the affairs of Crete were inadequately discussed during its progress, nor can any Member of the House recall a single case in which any question of public policy interesting to any large section of the House was prevented from coming on by the operation of this practice or rule.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): There was the instance, the other day, with reference to the employment of foreign seamen aboard British ships.*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think there can be a better illustration of what I mean. I do not think that anybody can pretend that that particular subject was not adequately discussed.

MR. LOUGH: The blocking motion was removed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; the motion was taken off and did not operate to prevent discussion. The statement I ventured to make was that in the recollection of the House no question of public policy had in fact been precluded from discussion by the operation of this practice, and the only case the hon. Member can call to mind proves to be an illustration of the very proposition I am making.

MR. COURTNEY: There were several cases during the period when the right hon. Gentleman was Chief Secretary for Ireland when discussion on the conduct of the Royal Irish Constabulary and other questions was prevented.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend's appetite for discussion must indeed be great if he thinks that the conduct of the Royal Irish Constabulary was not sufficiently discussed at that period. I really think that a less fortunate instance of the gagging of the House could hardly be mentioned than that my right hon. friend has happened to hit upon. I was about to say, when my right hon. friend threw in his pointless interruption, that if Members like the right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet are going about on a kind of piratical expedition to prevent any subject in which the House is interested being discussed, by means of bogus notices of motion, I do not for a moment doubt that serious public inconveniences might arise. Let me point out that the Standing Orders, at all events, provide an outlet—I do not think a sufficient one—even from that serious state of affairs. Nothing can prevent discussion on the Estimates, on the salaries of Ministers, or any relevant point on any Vote; and especially I will venture to say, under the new rules of Supply, any considerable demand for the discussion of a particular matter at a particular time is always agreed to by the Government. I have admitted that there is undoubted difficulty, though it has been accentuated and exaggerated; and let me now only ask the House not to rush too hastily to the conclusion that the whole of that inconvenience can be abolished by a resolution such as has been suggested without danger of some other difficulty, perhaps not so serious, but not to be lightly disposed of, arising in its place. It has been pointed out that it may be impossible to avoid dragging the House into a double discussion, under most inconvenient circumstances, and it has been suggested by my right hon. friend that it should be left to the Speaker to decide whether a matter is of urgent importance. That may be the proper course, but it will be throwing a new burden on the Speaker, who as I understand, has not now to decide whether a matter is one of immediate public importance. That has to be determined by the fact that forty hon. Members rise in their places. [Several HON.

* See page 680 of this Volume.

MEMBERS: No, no!] My view is that the Speaker judges of the definiteness, but the urgency and importance are decided by the House. Perhaps it would be for the convenience of the House if we know how the matter stands, and on a point of order I would appeal to you, Sir, for a ruling as to how we stand and what are the duties thrown upon the Chair by the Standing Order in relation to motions for adjournment.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Standing Order presents some difficulty in interpretation. When I came to the Chair I found the practice of the Speaker had been to deal with the question of definiteness himself, but as regards the urgency and public importance of the subject they have practically always been left to the decision of the House by the rising of at least forty Members in their places. I say "practically," for certainly I do not understand that the Speaker is bound to put a question as one of urgency and public importance if it is obviously ridiculous or frivolous, or so obviously unimportant that the Speaker ought not to put it. Subject to that limitation, that the question is obviously one that the Speaker ought not to submit to the House, the practice has been to leave the question of urgency and public importance to the House in the manner prescribed by the Standing Order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In order to clear our ideas on this matter, let me take a concrete case. Let us suppose there was some very important question of foreign policy about which some Gentleman had put a notice on the Paper, and upon which, by common expectation, a discussion of importance must arise. Suppose that a few days before that some private Member got up, with the assent of forty of his friends, and called the attention of the House to the subject as a matter of definite and urgent public importance. The whole arrangements of the House would be upset by this premature discussion, by the action of a small minority. I am disposed to say that that is not the least of two evils. I only mention this because we ought not to interfere with our practice in these matters without considering the *pros* and *cons* of the policy we pursue. We ought not to fly from evils that we know to evils that we know not of. I am not sure it might not be a good plan to refer this matter to the Committee on Procedure, which will have to sit later in the session—soon after Easter—and they may perhaps give the House some counsel in the matter. In the meanwhile, I hope my right hon. friend will abstain from putting down a series of burking resolutions, and will be content to leave this discussion to bear its natural and legitimate fruit in the minds of Members. The case has been put before the House both by the right hon. Gentleman and my right hon. friend. I have endeavoured to set forth the *pros* and *cons* for the suggested alteration in our practice. If the general opinion of the House is that that alteration should take place, I do not desire to oppose it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, Burghs): There is one respect in which I think the House has not yet fully sounded the extraordinary depths of this question, and I will endeavour to explain it to the House. The origin of this practice was that, as has already been explained, in old days, which many of us remember, it was in the power of any Member of the House during Question time, or at the end of Question time, to proceed, founding himself possibly upon the reply to a question he had himself put, to deliver an address of any length he chose, and he could always say, "I will put myself in order by concluding with a motion for the adjournment of the House." The result was that in a most irregular and irresponsible way the time of the House was occupied sometimes on the most trivial subjects. It was, I imagine, in order to prevent that abuse that the new rule was established, confining the power of moving the adjournment of the House in this irregular way to cases which had been formally submitted to the Speaker for approval more or less, the Member also showing that he had support from a certain considerable contingent of Members of the House. I think that the object was to regularise that form of procedure. The object of the new rule was to prevent a man, from a good or bad motive, from jealousy or vanity, or from over eagerness or too great a desire to benefit the public, rushing in and taking the water, as it were, of some honest, hard working, thoughtful man of foresight and intelligence who had secured an opportunity some weeks in advance of

bringing forward a particular subject. That is an evil which must be guarded against. But let me point out to the House that, while the new arrangement was aimed at those more or less irregular adjournments of the House moved by individual Members, that is not the case with us to-day. My right hon. friend did not rise to move the adjournment of the House. This is one of the stated occasions during the session when it has been by immemorial practice considered the right and privilege of the House to discuss anything connected with the conduct of the Government. And that is why it is made such a formal business that it cannot be moved in an offhand way or at the end of a sitting. Notice has to be given, so that when it is done there shall be full opportunity for debate. The motion for adjournment for the Easter holidays has been made at a time of great public anxiety, and my right hon. friend is prevented from discussing a matter of the very gravest moment by the accident of an hon. Member having put down a motion. I venture to say this is a much more important thing than a mere question of a Member getting up with a few of his friends and throwing the whole of the business of the House into confusion in order to bring forward something in which he and they are interested. The new practice has come to be a direct infringement of the traditional privileges of the House on the motion for adjournment for the holidays to discuss the whole gamut of public policy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but he seems to think it is the invariable practice to put down the motion for the adjournment for the holidays as the first Order, so that there can be a long discussion. I assure him he is incorrect. It is not absolutely necessary to give notice at all. The motion has constantly been put at the end of the Government Orders of the Day, and not at the beginning, so that if a discussion were to take place at all it would be in the small hours of the morning.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members generally will agree with me, if they search their memories, that the making of the motion for adjournment for the holidays has always been regarded as an opportunity, not to appropriate the whole sitting, but an opportunity when anything urgent can be dealt with. It is such an opportunity that is being invaded at the present moment. My right hon. friend wished to call attention to a very delicate and difficult question. I have a high opinion of the sagacity of my right hon. friend, but, for my part, I should not have thought that the present is a very opportune moment for any such discussion as he proposed to raise. But that is a matter of personal opinion. I do not complain because I have been shut out from making a speech. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that that is not my motive. But I do think there is more involved than the mere preventing the abuse of an irregular mode of discussing matters by a spontaneous moving of the adjournment of the House. What is involved is an invasion of an ancient privilege, which I think is one deserving of the respect of the House.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): The proceedings to-night have taken a very extraordinary and, I think, a very unfortunate turn. We have been deprived of an opportunity which many of us wished to avail ourselves of, to discuss, as we have a right to do, the position in which we find ourselves in regard to the war. And now we discover we are unable to do so on account of a bogus motion put down by an hon. Member on the other side of the House. I do not know whether even yet the Speaker might not exercise his authority. Look at the position. The blocking motion is for an "early day." Now, how is it possible for an hon. Member who is now in South Africa to bring on his motion on an "early day"? Could you, Mr. Speaker, not rule that this is a bogus motion and enable us to go on in the usual way? It is a great pity if we cannot. My right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition has said this is not an opportune time to discuss the South African position. I think it is an opportune time always to protest against the injustice and the wrong that is now going on. There is another point. What has become of free speech in this country? We are driven about from pillar to post, unable to get a hearing, and we thought to find refuge in this House; but we are met by a bogus

motion even in this House. This question of free speech is becoming rather serious. Some hon. Members may have observed that we managed to have a dinner the other night in a certain place of resort in London. But what do we see to-day? Why, that the man who holds the establishment says that he did not know what our dinner was about, and if he had known he would have swept us out. I point out that as a proof of the difficulty of getting free discussion now. Another incident has happened. My hon. friend the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs is going down next week to address his constituents, and what is the intimation that he has got? He is told by his agent that the speakers at his meeting will not be interfered with except by the missiles which will be thrown at them as they enter and leave the hall. That is a pretty sort of thing: we are to travel out of England before we can obtain the right of free speech. An hon. Gentleman just said to me, "If you want to speak against the war come over to Ireland." Fancy being driven out of the House of Commons, the old home of free speech, and being obliged to go to Ireland for the purpose of making a speech against the war. It is a sad state of things, and all arising out of the spirit of militarism which is becoming predominant in this country, and which, if not checked very shortly, will deprive us of many of the rights and privileges we so highly value.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I suggest to the right hon. Gentleman opposite that this Conciliation Committee is a little misplaced, and that if he wants to produce any effect with it he should transfer it to the Transvaal, and see if he could get any terms of conciliation from the Boers out there? I am not surprised that the constituents of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs should promise him a warm reception, because he went down to my constituency to speak against me. Now I want to say a word with regard to the rival claims—the urgent motion for an early day for the discussion of this war, and the motion which is blocked by that motion. My suggestion is that both the urgent motion and this motion should be allowed to go on, and I submit that to the consideration of the First Lord of the Treasury. The settled and considered motion can be debated when its time comes on, and this motion can be debated now. These blocking motions have taken upon themselves a very formidable character. We have thirty-three Members of this House away without leave soldiering in South Africa. [An HON. MEMBER: Ask for a call.] Yes, but the time has gone by for calls of this House, otherwise I, for one, should be very glad to see a call. Now one of those hon. Members before he went put a blocking motion on the Paper, and the subject cannot be debated in his absence. It is an abuse of the privileges of this House to put down such a motion, and it only arises from the fact of right hon. Members on the front bench giving hon. Members leave to serve in South Africa. If hon. Members had to obtain leave of the House before they went, then motions standing in their names would lapse, so that it is entirely in consequence of the irregularity of hon. Members going away without obtaining leave of absence that this unfortunate state of things has arisen. My right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury tells us that there is to be a Committee appointed to consider the procedure of this House. It is not before it is wanted. There are some Standing Orders which most urgently require amending, and I hope those Standing Orders will be referred to that Committee. Am I to understand from my right hon. friend that they will be referred to the Committee?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; my hon. friend is not to understand anything of the kind. I am not at all sure that there ought not to be a Committee appointed to revise the Standing Orders, but that is a very big order, and I certainly must not be taken to make any proposal on so large a scale.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I think if the right hon. Gentleman would consult the Chancellor of the Exchequer he would find that there are several which very much require to be amended.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): If the hon. Gentleman proposes to take action on this matter, I suggest that he might do so by opposing the adjournment for the holidays, on the ground that we ought not to leave here until we have discussed this motion. If the hon. Gentle-

man will do that I will tell with him. I would also venture to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that there is a way, to a certain extent, of meeting this matter. In olden days when Bills were blocked by a notice, the notice once put down lasted the whole session; that was subsequently modified by the hon. Member who put the notice down being obliged to renew his notice every week. It seems to me that we might meet a motion of this kind by laying it down that a motion does not hold good unless the hon. Gentleman who puts it down is in his place to renew it every week. Then if one hon. Gentleman went away and another hon. Gentleman desired to move a similar motion, we could deal with it. We have to deal with the fact that an hon. Gentleman who has gone abroad has put down a motion, and this prevents us discussing what is best to be done under the circumstances of this war. That cannot be fair or proper, and we want to do something. My right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin asked two or three questions which have not yet been answered. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for War is going to answer them or not, and I call attention to the fact that they are questions which demand an answer. One is with regard to the Transvaal prisoners; we have a large number of prisoners, and as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out, our prisoners are well treated in the Transvaal, and the Boers are under the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the prisoners we have taken are not so well treated. I asked the hon. Gentleman yesterday,* and he told me that there were some cases of illness, and some deaths. We want thoroughly to understand that something is being done and some care is being taken in order to mitigate and improve the position in which these unfortunate men are placed. There was another question which was pressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin; he asked what the law was, or what was our action with regard to martial law at the Cape. He pointed out that three men who were taken under martial law were sent down to the Cape, and when they arrived at the Cape it was discovered that they were outside the jurisdiction of martial law, and that they were then sent back to the place from which they came, where martial law did exist, where they were released without trial. I think that we should know something about this. I have always urged that it is difficult to say whether in a self-governing colony the military commander has a right to administer martial law without the consent of the governor of the colony. I do not think he has. There is another point that I should like to have some understanding about, and that is with reference to the proclamation read by the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary. As I understood it, anybody who wantonly damaged property is to be held responsible for such damage in his person and his goods. I do not think that we had any right to issue such a proclamation; our being at war with the Transvaal does not give us a right to interfere with its laws, unless we are in military occupation of the country. Then there is another proclamation issued by Sir Alfred Milner himself that we shall not recognise any transfer of property, though carried out with the full concurrence of the courts, after the war is over. We have no right to issue such a proclamation as that. A third thing which I should like to know is, what is the status of a Free Stater in that part of the Free State occupied by our troops. What are the Free Staters at the present moment? Are they Free Staters or are they British subjects? I cannot make out myself. I presume that in the view of Lord Roberts they are British subjects, because he has, without any right or authority whatsoever, deposed, as you may call it, the President of the Free State Republic. President Steyn he spoke of as "ex-President Steyn," and I saw here yesterday that there was a question put by an hon. Gentleman on that side to a Gentleman on the front bench asking something—I forget exactly what it was, but the words used were "ex-President Steyn." I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury or the Under Secretary for War whether we do recognise President Steyn as the President of the Free State or not, and whether we still recognise the authority of the Orange Free State as an independent Republic at present. I am not questioning as to whether there is to be annexation or not.

*See page 1253 of this volume.

I wish to know what is the status of the Orange Free State at present internationally, and what is the status of the inhabitants of the Free State toward us.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): The First Lord of the Treasury suggests that the main difficulty occupying us this afternoon would be to some extent met by referring this matter to a Committee of Procedure. Well, of course, even this method of inquiry will take time, and probably will not result in the mitigation of the situation in which we are placed for some time. Therefore, unless some practical step is taken the suggestion of the First Lord of the Treasury will not relieve the House from the difficulty of dealing with the question at all for a very long time. The question I have to ask the First Lord of the Treasury is whether he will not communicate with his hon. friend who has this motion on the Paper, and take such steps as may be desirable, and communicate also with other Members who may wish to place similar motions on the Paper, so that when reasonable occasion does arise in the course of the present session for dealing with this question the House may be able to discuss it. I think after the discussion we have had to-day we ought to have some assurance from the First Lord of the Treasury that he will make an effort to free the House from the difficulty of discussing a question which up to the present moment may not be ripe for discussion, but which within a few weeks may become eminently ripe for discussion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will telegraph.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member for Northampton referred to two subjects which were raised in the first place by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin. The hon. Gentleman put the case in such a pointed manner as to require an answer from me with reference to the prisoners of the South African Republic, and also on the subject of the administration of martial law. In regard to the case of the Boer prisoners in our hands and the treatment of the sick and wounded I have given a certain amount of information to the House, and I think all I can add to that information is that no distinction whatever is drawn in South Africa between the wounded and sick of the enemy and the wounded and sick of our own men. A sick or wounded Boer, like a sick or wounded Englishman, is carried into one of our hospitals, field or stationary, and is treated without any kind of discrimination, just in the same way as any person run over in the streets of London would be treated if carried into a hospital. All that can be done to alleviate the necessary horrors and distresses of war is done, and I may say always has been done. I say with confidence that one of the outcomes of war has often been the touching commiseration shown for the victims of war, and that has always been characteristic of the officers who have commanded in the British Army. Now I pass to the question of the procedure under martial law.

MR. LABOUCHERE: What I wanted to know was whether it was consistent with the health of these prisoners that they should all be shut up together in the hulks.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member is aware that we have made arrangements for their removal from the hulks, and either confining them on shore at the Cape or sending them to St. Helena. Prisoners who were taken at the earlier stages of the war expressed a preference to go to St. Helena. The question of the safety of the prisoners must be paramount. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin quoted a definition of martial law as no law at all. I think that goes a great deal too far. There is some confusion in the minds of hon. Members as to the difference between martial law and military law. Military law only applies to soldiers and to persons amenable to Army discipline. Martial law is a wholly distinct matter. It is the best substitute which can be contrived by those commanding an army of occupation for the civil law which has been dislocated and impaired by the very fact that warlike operations are being prosecuted, and it is in that spirit that martial law is administered. That general statement, I think, completely answers the criticisms the right hon. Gentleman has offered. The hon. Member for Northampton has asked what is the status of the Free Staters in

the portions of the Free State occupied by our Army. The Free Staters have the status that the French had when the army of Germany occupied a portion of France, and that the Turks had when the army of Russia occupied a portion of the Turkish Empire—that is to say, they are persons living in an area occupied by a preponderating military force. The duty of the officer commanding that force is twofold. He must, by the immemorial consent of nations, take all necessary steps for the safety of his force, and he is expected to take all the steps he can to provide a substitute for the civil law which has been destroyed owing to the fact that the army is there. Take the other case referred to by the hon. Member. Take the case of a portion of Cape Colony where martial law has been proclaimed. We have been reading in the newspapers that magistrates have in some cases been prisoners for weeks and months surrounded by rebels in arms. That is an illustration of my point. Civil law has become impossible, and in such a case the military commander is the only one who can supply a substitute. Lately detailed instructions have been issued to guide officers who administer martial law. They are instructed to follow as far as possible the rules of evidence and to model their proceedings on the proceedings of civil tribunals, and their attention has been specially directed to any charges, the presumption of which might not be well founded, urged against persons of Dutch nationality; and in respect of the more serious charges of high treason, which would carry with them the extreme penalty of the law, it has been provided that a judge of the Supreme Court of Cape Colony shall preside over the trials, although conducted under the provisions of martial law. Beyond that I do not think it is possible to go. The best guarantee that we can have in this House is in the character and record of the officer who, in the last resort, administers this law in South Africa—Field Marshal Lord Roberts. As far as I am aware, the only scandals which have occurred under martial law were when the personal character of some commander—I am speaking of centuries ago—was such as to make him negligent of the duties falling upon him. Under such circumstances I am convinced that Lord Roberts, with all the facts before him, is better able to temper justice with mercy than we are, and that he will lose no opportunity of doing so.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): The only rule of the House with respect to the point in dispute is that which was announced in 1897. Practically, the House has no option in the matter. If at that time the Speaker misconstrued a rule, and adopted one for which there is no warrant in the Standing Orders, the House has practically no means whatever of disagreeing with that ruling. Therefore it is rather hard to say that the practice of the House has followed that. It is not the practice of the House, but the practice of the Speaker who gave the ruling. I wish to ask as a question of order whether the rule obtains in this House which obtains in courts of law, that every Speaker is bound to follow the ruling of every previous Speaker as to the meaning of any particular Standing Order. If that be the case, it seems to me that the House is absolutely at the mercy of any Speaker who may be in the chair at the moment—that he may give a ruling on a Standing Order which every subsequent Speaker will be bound to follow, as it is practically impossible for the House to rescind it. The only way in which it could be rescinded, so far as private Members are concerned, is by balloting, but according to my experience you may ballot for years and years without success. If you do succeed in gaining a chance it is probably taken away from you. The result is most deplorable. Free debate on the part of private Members has been completely abolished within the last twelve or fifteen years, not by the action of the House, except in a very slight degree, but by rulings from the Chair, over which the House has absolutely no control whatever.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member will not be in order in discussing the rulings of the Chair. Moreover, he is altogether wrong in saying the House has no remedy. The House can always deal with such rulings by a substantive motion.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I will not proceed any further with the subject. What I meant by saying the House had no remedy was that the private Members have practically no remedy, because it is

absolutely useless, unless the Government take the matter up, to endeavour to obtain by ballot any change in the Standing Orders of the House. With regard to the position of the Government, the fact is that no matter who, whether the Conservatives or whether the Liberals, are in power, they are always in favour of the restriction of the rights of private Members, and therefore they will never move in the matter. They can always—and properly—count on the support of the Chair in the carrying on of business, and therefore they never take any steps for the purpose of recovering the lost liberties of the House in respect of debate. I hope that private Members will take this into consideration, and that, irrespective of party—and I may now appeal to the Conservatives—they will put pressure on the Government in order that some of this lost liberty of debate may be recovered. To pass to the other matters which have been discussed, I think the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for War has rather misapprehended the complaint in regard to the exercise of martial law. It is not that the ultimate decisions have been unjust. I have been carefully through the newspapers, and I do not find any great complaint of the ultimate decisions. As a rule the cases in which complaints have been made are cases in which persons have been kept under martial law for long periods without examination or trial, or even the formulation of charges against them, and when charges have been formulated they have been proved to be unfounded. Our suspicion is that under martial law private individuals are enabled to wreak their vengeance upon other private individuals in the district. That is an evil which obtains in all countries in times of agitation and especially in times of panic. It was so in France at the time of the 1870 war. At that time it was dangerous for almost any foreigner to travel in France, for fear of being denounced as a spy. I am afraid there is a similar danger now with regard to the state of affairs in South Africa in the districts in which military operations have taken place, especially in Cape Colony, where we find that respectable Dutch people have been incarcerated for weeks, many of them being subjected to the same rules of imprisonment and diet as are imposed upon convicts, and afterwards liberated without conviction. There are not merely one or two, but a large number of these cases, and they lead us to believe that there has been a gross abuse of this power, not in the higher officers who decide these matters, but in the underlings. There certainly ought to be some investigation of this matter, as there is great danger that feelings will be emibittered and the pacification of the districts made more difficult if such injustices are perpetrated. I wish also to refer to the treatment of the Boer prisoners. The complaint is not that the wounded are not properly treated. We know that our medical men are absolutely above any petty revenge of that kind. There has never been the slightest hint or suspicion that they were in the least degree tainted by any partiality in their treatment of the wounded. But there certainly has been some feeling with respect to the treatment of the unwounded prisoners. That has now been recognised, and we are told that they are to be brought ashore. It is humiliating enough for Englishmen to be beaten in the field by our enemies, but it is more humiliating to be beaten by the Boers in magnanimity of conduct towards opponents. We certainly have been beaten in that respect. ["No!"] How have they treated prisoners? They might have sent them to underground mines under the pretence of securing safety, especially as they had the excuse that several prisoners have escaped, and that they have very few men to guard the remainder, practically all the able-bodied men being at the front. But they did nothing of the kind. On the other hand, we have thousands and thousands of men in South Africa who could without difficulty be put in charge of the Boer prisoners on shore, but instead of that the prisoners are being sent to St. Helena. The two newspaper correspondents—Mr. Winston Churchill and another—who have been taken prisoners have been most strongly impressed by the Boer conduct in this respect. It seems that as soon as correspondents come into personal contact with the Boers, their sense of honour, honesty and truth obliges them to give our opponents the highest character. The Boers have also beaten us in magnanimity to helpless men and men crying for quarter. There has not been a single complaint against the Boers of having refused to give quarter when asked. On the contrary, they have gone further

than the rules of warfare and the practice of soldiers demanded. On the other hand, we have correspondents and privates writing home after the battles of the Modder, Elandslaagte, and others, priding themselves on the fact that the Boers were falling on their knees praying for mercy, and receiving the reply, "Remember Majuba Hill," and then being bayonetted or shot. I am eager and willing to believe that these stories are somewhat exaggerated, and I cannot believe that there are many men in our Army who have fallen so low; but the fact that these reports were sent home by soldiers and newspaper correspondents shows that among a section of them, at any rate, a depraved state of things exists in respect to this matter. It is not a noble and manly or a soldier-like thing to kill a man who is begging for mercy, and I wish that our commanders would take care that a proper feeling should be cultivated amongst the troops, although I believe that that feeling animates a large majority of our men. We should also see that that feeling extends to this base minority who have not acted according to the rules of war, and have evidently declined to give quarter to the enemy when asked to do so. [Cries of "Divide!"] This is a matter of great importance, and this is the only opportunity we shall have of discussing it, so I do not see why hon. Members should be in such a hurry to divide. I think some trouble should be taken by those in charge of our troops to see that the laws of warfare are not abused by our troops.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I am astonished at the speech of the hon. Member for the Eifion Division. It seems to me that the hon. Member is willing to believe every story against our Army——

MR. BRYN ROBERTS: I desire to say that——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member has no right to interrupt unless the hon. Gentleman who is in possession of the House gives way.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT: It appears to me that the hon. Member is ready to credit every possible story against our own troops, and to give credit to the Boers where no credit whatever is due. I was present at the capitulation at Paardeberg, and I can tell the hon. Member that the treatment of the Boer prisoners by the English soldiers was admirable to see. Our soldiers did everything they could to relieve the distress of the Boers. The hon. Member complains that our men did not give them water. I can assure him that our soldiers went amongst the prisoners, giving them both food and water, not only after the capitulation, but also on their way to the Modder. I had no intention of speaking, but I could not possibly sit and listen to a statement of this kind and not say a word in refutation of it. Something has been said about the treatment of the Boer wounded. I have seen a great many Boer wounded in a great many hospitals in different parts of South Africa, and I can bear testimony to the most undoubted fact which was stated by the Under Secretary for War that no difference whatever has been made in the treatment of the Boer wounded and the English wounded. In the hospital at Wynberg I conversed with many Boer prisoners, and I also spoke to Commandant Pretorius, and I asked him if they had any complaint to make or any suggestion for better treatment. Commandant Pretorius said that nothing could exceed the kindness of our troops and the Army Medical Corps to the Boer prisoners, and gratitude was depicted on the face of every Boer prisoner I saw. I desire to say one word in regard to the admirable work which has been done by the Royal Army Medical Department in Cape Colony, Natal, at the front, at the stationary hospital, and at the base hospital. Nothing could possibly exceed the kindness, the skill, and the zeal with which they have done their work, and one is gratified to know that the recent changes made in the Royal Army Medical Department have not only been a great improvement, but they have given great satisfaction to the officers of the Army itself. I should like to thank Her Majesty's Government for having appointed some of the leading surgeons of the day to proceed to the seat of war, and I also desire to thank those eminent surgeons who have sacrificed their practice and gone out to the front in order to render the best possible service to our troops. The hon. Member opposite and the hon. Member for Northampton have spoken of the treatment of unwounded

Boer prisoners. I saw the Boer prisoners at Simons Town, and I saw them in camp myself. Their camp is organised on exactly the same principles as the camp of a British regiment. The prisoners are divided into battalions, they are fed in the same way, and are tended and camped in exactly the same way as our own men. When, scarcely four weeks ago, I was in the Boer prisoners' camp at Simons Town, it was a pleasure to me to see how happy and merry the Boer prisoners were, playing football and other games, and to see what sources of recreation were provided for them. I think I should add a word or two about the administration of martial law. I have been in Natal, as also in frontier provinces, and from no source have I been able to obtain any evidence that martial law is administered in a rigorous or harsh way. On the contrary, in Durban, for example, under the administration of martial law by Captain Percy Scott, many of the inhabitants said to me that they had never seen the town so quiet and so well ordered, or so much peace and liberty prevailing. The only other matter I desire to allude to is as to Lord Roberts. My hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War stated that he was quite sure that it was the desire of Lord Roberts to do everything that was possible to minimise the racial feeling which, unfortunately, undoubtedly exists in South Africa. It is impossible to exaggerate the extraordinary tact with which Lord Roberts has acted throughout the campaign, not alone concerning our own Army, but concerning the administration of the occupied districts. There are many people who, without knowledge of the facts, think that Lord Roberts may have gone too far in his desire to extend sympathy to those who have now been placed in an unfortunate position in the occupied districts. I was present when Lord Roberts received General Cronje, and I was cognisant of all the arrangements he made for the conveyance of the prisoners to Simons Town, and I can say that there is no single Dutchman in Cape Colony, or in Natal, or in the occupied districts, or in any district in which martial law prevails, who does not realise that the Commander-in Chief of the British troops in South Africa is not only doing all that he possibly can to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion, but he is also doing all he can to minimise those horrors of war which are absolutely inevitable from its pursuit. I will not detain the House further, but I could not remain seated and hear the statements made by the hon. Member for the Eifion Division, which are calculated to do great harm to Her Majesty's forces, who are doing their very best in South Africa for their Queen and country. Such a statement cannot fail to cause pain to honourable and gallant officers, who are doing their utmost to administer the law and the responsibilities confided to them in the most humane and admirable manner.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I only wish to say one word on this subject in regard to the rule which has hampered the House. No doubt there is a great deal to be said from the standpoint of inconvenience; but, I think, we ought to remember also that this much-abused rule has its advantages. This rule has prevented to-day a debate which I consider would have done a good deal of harm in South Africa, because any remarks made by the hon. Member for the Eifion Division would have been telegraphed over to South Africa and they would have done a great deal of mischief. Therefore, this rule has tended to save us from having a debate upon the arrangement of the terms of peace, upon which question the expression of the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin and others would have done immense mischief at the present time. In altering this rule we must remember that there is a good side to it, and no stronger instance of its utility can be found than the proceedings of this afternoon, whereby this rule has prevented a most mischievous and dangerous discussion, and one which, if it had taken place, would have done immense harm in this country. In regard to this war the time seems to have come when a certain number of hon. Members of this House do not mind what they say or how they abuse our own men. Not only this, but they seem to delight in believing everything that is said against us whether it is true or not. The hon. Member said with regard to one of the statements he made that he did not think it was true, and that it was mere hearsay, and yet he has repeated it in this House, and no doubt it will be telegraphed to South

Africa, where it may do incalculable mischief. I saw instances of this when I was in South Africa at the beginning of the war. I am surprised that hon. Members opposite do not restrain themselves, and are inclined to think that the only nation in the world that is criminal to the root is our own country. I think it is a grand thing that this rule has prevented a very mischievous debate from taking place.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): I desire to make a protest against the hon. Member for Central Sheffield coming here and accusing my hon. friend of saying things which he never said. If the hon. Member had been present during the whole of the speech of the hon. Member for the Eifion Division he would not have made those remarks.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I was here the whole of the time.

MR. H. J. WILSON: It is not fair to accuse my hon. friend of things which he did not say. The whole statement made by my hon. friend was with reference to the prisoners on board ship, and if the hon. Member thinks he disputes that complaint by speaking of the camp, he is very much mistaken. Then the hon. Member for North Islington repeated similar slanders.

MR. BARTLEY: I rise to order, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. Member in order in using such language?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; the hon. Member should withdraw that expression.

MR. H. J. WILSON: I beg leave to withdraw those words.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what he intends to do in view of the Return which has just been issued in regard to the sea fisheries of the United Kingdom, which shows a falling off in the fishing population of Scotland of 25 per cent. This is a very serious matter, for there is no such falling off either in England, Wales, or in Ireland. In the year 1894 the number of persons employed in the fishing industry in Scotland was 50,589, but in 1898 it had fallen to 38,508, or a decrease of 12,081. I wish to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government propose to take any steps to inquire into this matter. I have repeatedly brought the question of illegal trawling under the notice of the Lord Advocate. I have no doubt illegal trawling is largely responsible for this state of things, and is simply ruining the line fishing. As the hon. Member for Aberdeen stated the other night, fishermen are being driven from the fishing villages into the large towns. The First Lord of the Admiralty knows what a fine body of men these Scotch fishermen are, and we are fast losing a very valuable class from which the Naval and Marine services may be recruited. The Lord Advocate has treated this matter very lightly, and he has not the courtesy to come and take his seat while the subject is being discussed. The registered number of fishing boats in Scotland in 1894 was 11,217, but in 1898 it had fallen to 10,485, or a fall of 732. There is no such fall in England, Wales, or in Ireland, where the number of fishermen are increasing, and it is only in Scotland that there is this tremendous diminution, which I attribute to illegal trawling. This subject does not receive the attention of the Government, and I would urge the First Lord of the Admiralty to see if he cannot send down some of the cruisers which are now lying idle to do police duty, so that this great Scottish industry may be protected, and not allowed to go to ruin. With regard to the unsatisfactory harbours we may be told that they were good enough fifty years ago, but they are unsuitable now owing to the increased size of fishing boats; moreover, no fund is provided for their upkeep and extension. I should be glad to have the attention of the First Lord of the Treasury to these matters, seeing that they are treated with such indifference by the Lord Advocate. The First Lord of the Treasury claims to be a Scotsman, and I think he might show a little sympathy to those of his countrymen who are now in such a plight in regard to the fishing industry. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will give his attention to this subject, and not allow this terrible depopulation of the fishing villages in Scotland to go on. I am sorry to have to occupy the time of the House on such an occasion; but it is a matter of very serious importance to the Scottish people, and I deplore the want of courtesy shown by

the Lord Advocate in failing to be in his place when such questions are laid before the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

NEW BILL.

BANK HOLIDAY ACTS AMENDMENT.

Bill to amend the Bank Holiday Acts, 1871 and 1874, and to make provision for an additional Bank Holiday, to be called Empire Day, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Faithfull Begg, Sir Howard Vincent, Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones, Mr. Hedderwick, Mr. Scott Montagu, Mr. William Johnston, Mr. Bainbridge, and Mr. Price.

BANK HOLIDAY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Bank Holiday Acts, 1871 and 1874, and to make provision for an additional Bank Holiday, to be called Empire Day," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 23rd May, and to be printed. [Bill 175.]

FINANCE BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Order for Third Reading read.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I undertook, in moving the Third Reading, to give to the House some information with regard to the details of the revenue and expenditure of last year, and the influence which the great increase in the revenue last year may have upon the revenue receipt of the year in which we now stand. Hon. Members will see from the Paper which has been presented that the total receipt from taxation in the past year amounted to as much as £129,757,000, or £11,900,000 in excess of the revenue of the previous year. Of this sum £9,917,000 went to the Local Taxation Account, £396,000 more than the previous year; and £119,840,000 was received by the Exchequer, an increase of £11,504,000 over the receipts of the previous year. I do not suppose that so enormous an increase as that for one year over its predecessor ever happened before by the purely automatic effect of taxation. I think that out of the revenue of the year only £800,000 was due to increased taxes, and therefore practically the House will see that the revenue of last year increased by no less than £10,700,000 over the revenue of its predecessor purely by the automatic increase of existing taxation. Now, I should like for a few minutes to detain the House by an inquiry as to how that extraordinary increase has accrued. Hon. Members will recollect that in forming my estimate of the yield of the revenue for the year just closed, when I introduced the Budget on March 5th,* I stated that my calculations were based on figures arrived at a few days before I spoke, and that since then there had been remarkable clearances of dutiable articles by which those figures might be largely disturbed. As a matter of fact, the disturbance was very much larger than I had anticipated, and this will appear from a brief examination of the receipts from Customs and Inland Revenue last year. The total receipts from the Customs revenue by the Exchequer last year were £23,800,000; my original estimate of these receipts had been £21,770,000, and my estimate of March 5th was £22,130,000. The actual receipts were £2,950,000 in excess of the revenue of 1898-99. Such an increase obviously cannot be accounted for in any ordinary way. The great bulk of this increase was due to clearances in anticipation of increase of duty. Those began as far back as January 25th last, but they culminated on the two days after the announcement of the date when the Budget would be introduced, between March 3rd and 5th, and I may state that in those two days there was an excess of receipt from Customs of as much as £1,975,000 over the receipt of the two corresponding days of the previous year. £380,000 of that excess came from tea, £1,250,000 from tobacco, £245,000 from foreign spirits, and £100,000 from other dutiable articles. In the same way, between March 1st and 5th, the excess of receipts from British spirits was £1,473,000 above that of the corresponding days of the previous year. If I go into the details of the customs revenue I think this will

* See Appendix I. to this volume.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., p. 53.

come out even more clearly. Foreign spirits were originally estimated to produce £4,310,000; the estimate of March 5 was £4,680,000, and the amount which was actually produced was £4,910,000. After carefully calculating how much of that revenue was really due to last year, my advisers assured me that £240,000 of it were receipts that ought to have come into the present year and had been a wrongful gain to the year that has closed. My original estimate of receipts from tea was £3,970,000; on March 5th I estimated them at £4,200,000, and they actually produced £4,750,000. My advisers considered that out of that the sum of £625,000 was really due to this year, and ought to have come into this year's accounts. Nearly as much as one-seventh of the total consumption of tea for this year is tea that paid duty last year, and the duty on it, therefore, does not come into this year at all. Tobacco has been rather a failing revenue. My original estimate of the yield of tobacco last year was £10,840,000; the estimate of March 5th was £10,700,000, and the actual receipts turned out to be £11,510,000. That was solely due to the great clearances on the 3rd and 5th of March, as much as £760,000 of the proper revenue of this year being put into the revenue of last year. The original estimate of the receipts from wine was £1,680,000, and the actual amount produced was £1,740,000, of which it is estimated that £80,000 properly belongs to the receipts of the present year. Even those concerned in dealing with dried fruits were so alarmed at a possibly increased taxation that as much as £20,000 was paid by them in anticipation of increased duties, which went wrongfully into the receipts of last year. The total Exchequer receipts from Excise last year were £32,100,000, or £2,900,000 more than the receipts for 1898-99 and £2,250,000 more than my original estimate. Beer, of course, was not affected by anticipatory clearances, the duty being levied in a different way, and the receipts from beer amounting to £11,890,000, were very slightly above what I had originally estimated them to be.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give the total figures?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: On spirits the total receipts were £19,632,000, or £2,212,000 over my original estimate, and £1,132,000 over my estimate of March 5th. Spirits had begun to be cleared in anticipation of an increase of duty as soon as the middle of January, and that culminated on the first five days in March. The total result of the figures I have detailed to the House is this—that there was something like £1,700,000 of Customs receipts gained to the year that has passed at the expense of the present year, and £1,500,000 of Excise. There have been some other increases in the revenue beyond my anticipations, due to other causes. Stamps produced £100,000 more than I expected on March 5th—£8,500,000 in all. I stated then that as the income-tax was almost entirely paid in the current quarter it was too soon to tell how much the income tax was likely to yield. It actually did yield £150,000 more than I expected—£18,750,000 in all. But the death duties defeated me again. I put the death duties on March 5th at £13,300,000 to the Exchequer, and £4,171,000 to the Local Taxation Fund — £17,471,000 in all. Then I remember there was some wonder at the extraordinary increase of the death duty yield for the year. But, as hon. Members will already have seen, their yield amounted to even more than that. A sum of £14,020,000 went to the Exchequer and a sum of £4,453,000 to the Local Taxation Fund—£18,473,000 in all from death duties. There was a very great increase in the total amount both realty and personalty that paid estate duty last year. In the previous year the amount of realty paying estate duty was £49,395,000; the amount of realty paying estate duty last year was £57,760,000. The amount of personalty paying estate duty in 1898-99 was £198,801,000; last year it was as much as £229,600,000. With regard to the yield of these duties, I may say that February had been a very good month, and it was considered, and I think rightly considered at the time, that March was not likely also to be exceptionally good. But in March the personalty paying estate duty increased no less than 50 per cent. over the corresponding month of last year. There seemed to be a sort of feeling during the last quarter on the part of solicitors that if wills were not brought in for payment during the quarter there might be some increased taxation, and during March no less than £440,000 was received from estates

paying high rates. These are reasons why my estimate of the total yield of the death duties has been so much exceeded. With regard to expenditure, I have little variation to make from the Estimates which I gave on March 5th, but that variation is on the right side. The ordinary expenditure of the year is £110,505,000; the war expenditure, £23,217,000; total, £133,722,000. Against this there is an Exchequer revenue of £119,840,000, leaving a deficit of £13,882,000—nearly four millions better than the Estimate I present on March 5, when I stated to the House that there would probably be a deficit of over £17,770,000. That deficit is met by £8,000,000 of Treasury Bills, by £2,550,000 first instalment of the War Loan, and by a temporary draft on our balances of £3,332,000, which will be repaid on Tuesday next from the second instalment of the War Loan. There is only one matter with which I have now to detain the House, and that is a matter which concerns the future. What effect is this illegitimate gain of nearly £4,000,000 in the receipts of last year likely to have on the probable receipts of the year that is before us? I am afraid we shall lose in two ways. We shall lose, of course, to some extent by failing to receive from those goods that were cleared with such ardour on March 3rd and 5th the increase of duty which the Committee sanctioned on March 5th. I made allowance for that loss in my calculations on March 5th, because—I do not know whether it escaped the notice of hon. Members—I took no credit at that time for the receipts from the increased duty between March 5th and 31st. I practically had put those receipts against the loss from anticipating clearances which I felt sure would occur, and I balanced one against the other. Now, owing to this great amount of clearances there has been a greater loss under that head than I expected, and I think there will probably be a loss of Customs on the coming year, by reason of the increased duty having been escaped, of something like £215,000. But that is a small matter compared with the loss of the original duty which properly belongs to the year and which has gone into the receipts of the previous year. The effect, of course, is to transfer the proper revenue of 1900-1 to the revenue of the year 1899-1900, because a considerable part of the dutiable goods which will be consumed during the year have already paid duty and will not produce any revenue this year. On the other hand we may fairly consider that some gain may be expected from the increasing prosperity of the country. Every year that passes really seems to show a greater improvement in our trade and a greater power of consumption; and, although I have shown the House that we have practically lost for the year that is to come £1,700,000 from Customs and £1,500,000 from Excise—£3,200,000 altogether—yet I do think we have in the reason to which I have just referred a set off against a considerable portion of that loss. I think, Sir, that if I reduce my estimated Customs receipts for the year in which we now are from £25,017,000, the estimate of March 5th, to £23,620,000, I shall make a fair estimate of the probable receipts from Customs in the year before us. The House must remember that the Customs revenue is not as growing a revenue as the revenue from British spirits received by the Excise. In spite of these anticipations there has been a very considerable clearance of British spirits during March and up to the present time, and I think we may safely say that if we reduce the estimate of Excise revenue from £34,350,000 to £33,550,000 that will be a fair estimate of what we are likely to receive. Then I am bound to admit to the House that there is another matter in which I think it necessary to make a change. I think some surprise was expressed at my estimate of the receipts from the income tax, and I have seen various calculations to prove that I have put them much too low. I think those calculations did not sufficiently take into account the certain effect of a large increase in the rate of income tax upon the receipts. In the first place, there is a much greater temptation to evasion and to the return of smaller profits than a man has actually received, when the tax is a shilling instead of eightpence in the £. In the second place, there is also a greater risk of bad debts owing to non-collection of income tax; and, further, there is a much greater tendency, when the income tax is high, and a very proper tendency, on the part of those entitled to exemption or abatement, to make claims for relief which they would not have thought of making if the tax stood at a lower level. For all these reasons I considered in March that a shilling tax would probably

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

yield about £85,000 less for each penny of the tax than it had yielded when at 8d. But, on the other hand, I have to consider the fact, and it is a very gratifying fact, that the yield of the income tax at 8d. increased by £750,000 in 1898-99 over the previous year, and by £750,000 in 1899-90, or £1,500,000 in two years; and I think we may be confident that that increase is still going on. Therefore I propose to raise my estimate of the receipts from income tax from £25,300,000 to £25,800,000. I think, too, that the present aspect of the stamp revenue would justify an increase of £150,000 on my original estimate Now I will give to the House the detailed figures of the probable revenue. I have explained that the receipts from the larger estates under the head of death duties during the year were entirely unexpected, and I do not think I should be justified in increasing that estimate. From Customs I expect £23,620,000, Excise £33.550,000, estate duties £13,000,000, stamp duties £8,550,000, land tax £800,000, house duty £1,650,000, income tax £25,800,000, being a total of £106,970,000. Adding to that £20,550,000 of non-tax revenue, which I think should be left at the same figure I gave on March 5th, there is a total estimated revenue of £127,520,000. On the other hand, as to expenditure, there are Consolidated Fund charges, amounting to £21,360,000, after allowing for the suspension of £4,640,000, the repayment of capital wrapped up in terminable annuities, which the House has practically agreed to accept, and to that I have to add £619,000 for interest on the War Loan, making the total Consolidated Fund services £21,979,000. The Supply services amount to £128,082,000, making a total of £150,061,000 expenditure. The revenue being deducted from that the deficit will work out at £22,541,000. Add to that the actual deficit of last year, £13,882,000, and there will be an aggregate deficit for the two years of £36,423,000, and this will be provided for partly by Treasury bills for £8,000,000, and the remainder by the proceeds of the War Loan, which will leave, after replacing the amounts temporarily taken out of balances, a margin of £1,127,000, besides, of course, the further borrowing powers of £5,000,000 which are included in the War Loan Act, and which have not yet been exercised. I stated on March 5th that we should no doubt require a considerable portion of that sum, quite apart from war expenditure, for the purpose of increasing military and naval reserves, of guns, ammunition, stores, and so forth. I have to thank the House for the patience with which they have listened to what I am afraid has been a dry statement; but I thought it right to put before the House, what I was unable to do on March 5th, details of the actual receipts of the past year, and, of course, it was necessary that I should make the corrections which followed from the increased revenue we have received, both in the general financial situation and in the probable result of the revenue of the year to come. I hope the House will consider that, as a whole, the result of last year has been most satisfactory, and that our prospects for the future are by no means bad.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has laid before the House with his usual frankness, clearness and ability the situation as it now stands; but I do not think we can possibly pass this occasion by without recognising, whether we look at expenditure, or whether we look at revenue or debt, that it is one of the most momentous financial events which has happened in the last half of this century. I do not find fault with the right hon. Gentleman, because I know the circumstances which have led him to make what would otherwise be regarded as a premature Budget statement; but the result has been that we have not been able to give to the actual financial situation even the ordinary consideration which would be given at a time much less important than the present. We are now on the Third Reading of the Finance Bill, and for the first time we are receiving the true account of the condition of our monetary affairs in the past year and the estimate of what we are to expect in the future; and that at a time when the revenue of the country has been beyond comparison greater than at any former period, when we are imposing taxes I think to a larger amount than any man now in this House has ever known, and

increasing the Debt by an amount which has not been known since the great war. That is a situation which certainly ought to demand from the House of Commons very mature consideration, as regards both the past and the future; but we are not able—I am not complaining of that—to give it the consideration we might expect it would receive, and which we ought to give to it, because it has always been a standing rule, founded on common sense, that when we hear the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the first time we must take time to consider the bearing of that statement on the finances of the future year. Therefore we have never hazarded an opinion on a statement such as we have just heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer without taking some days to master the figures, but we are now going, practically speaking, to-night, after a discussion necessarily brief, to dispose of the greatest question of revenue, of expenditure, of taxation. and of debt that has ever been brought before the House certainly in my life time. That is a warning, I think, against early Budget statements, and I hope there will never again be occasion for it. Our minds have been very much perplexed by what is called the provisional Budget. We have just mastered that and now we find that the expectations formed by the authorities of what the revenue was likely to be were out to the amount of £4,000,000. We used to reckon in the old days that to be out a million in the year was rather bad, but when you come to have upon a single year a surplus of £9,500,000, you may call that a very large order indeed. I cannot help looking at this matter as I have looked at it before, and asking myself what would have been the situation if there had been no war with a realised surplus of £9,500,000. What could you not have done with a surplus such as that. You are contemplating a mass of reforms in this country. Such a surplus might have given you old-age pensions or a system of secondary education. It might have given you many things for which money is sorely needed, but instead we have increased taxation and a great accumulation of debt. It is not only the mouth of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that must water at such a prospect as that —a realised surplus of upwards of £9,000,000.

Sir William Harcourt.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This surplus, to the extent of more than £3,000,000, is due to anticipatory clearances which would never have existed but for the necessity of increasing taxation.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That only shows the difficulty created by being obliged to deal with these figures at a moment's notice. I had no idea until this moment that the right hon. Gentleman put the result of the anticipatory clearances at upwards of £3,000,000. At any rate, that would leave a surplus of £6,000,000, and that is a comfortable surplus which gives great hope for the future, because if you can get apart from these exceptional circumstances a surplus of £6,000,000 you may expect an additional million from the increase in the population and in the ordinary contributions to the revenue. The £6,000,000 you have realised would have gone to the liquidation of the debt instead of their being an increase of debt. The surplus of £6,000,000 in the year that is past would have given you the expectation of a very large revenue in the next year—probably larger than the present. This would have been the prospect you would have had but for the war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has admitted that, whereas he put the deficit on the past year, including the war expenditure, at £17,000,000, it will now be only £13,000,000. The consequence is that the resources he requires to meet the expenditure of the present year will be £4,000,000 less than he had anticipated in his provisional statement. Now, I desire to ask what is going to be done with those £4,000,000? Of course, what you are looking to is the operation of what would have been a surplus upon the debt, and I do not know whether I am right in suggesting that, if you have a deficit of £4,000,000 less than was estimated, it would be reasonable to expect that you would require only half of eight millions of Treasury bills that you raised for the purposes of the year which is just concluded. If that be so, I would submit to the right. hon. Gentleman that it might be possible to diminish the addition to the Treasury bills which he has already proposed.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I intended to intimate that our position is better, no doubt, though not to the extent which

I think the right hon. Gentleman suggests, and I think that possibly I may not require to raise some of the five millions of Treasury bills which I still have in reserve. But, of course, the future, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, is most uncertain.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am speaking really from the final Paper of the right hon. Gentleman where he puts it in figures that his deficit is now, according to present calculations, thirteen millions as against seventeen millions which appeared in the provisional Estimate.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: But a considerable portion of that gain is a loss to the revenue of this year.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: After all, the foundation of all our finance is in dealing—whatever may be the causes of shifting revenue—with the actual expenditure. The keystone of the whole is that each year should be complete in itself; and that therefore you cannot, unless you go into that vicious system which in foreign countries goes by the name of *virements*, and transfer the revenue of one year to another. You must treat the revenue and expenditure of one year as complete in itself. Therefore, I am looking at the present revenue of the year 1899-1900 by itself. The right hon. Gentleman has so treated, and properly treated, the matter, and has given us the figures of the expenditure and revenue of that year; he has drawn a balance and shown a deficit in his provisional statement of seventeen millions, but now, in the final account, it is reduced thirteen millions. If it had been a surplus he would have been obliged to apply it to the National Debt; at any rate, the accounts must have been kept separate. I only say this by the way. What I was urging upon the right hon. Gentleman was that he must have benefited in some form or other by getting £4,000,000 more of revenue in the past year than he expected; and I venture to say that he had better apply those £4.000,000, whether he has got them in in meal or in malt, to the diminution of the Floating Debt, rather than to any other purpose. The figures of the whole revenue are certainly most astounding. It is impossible that anybody could have apprehended that the wealth of the country should have developed itself in the degree it has done in the last two years. I only hope that we shall not abuse the willing horse by treating that revenue in the way that people do of whom it is said, "Money easily got is easily lost." I come now to the question of what is going to happen in the year which is to come. I never venture to challenge the estimates of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has sources of information which are open to nobody else, but we cannot regard him as infallible. And certainly of late there has, it seems to me, been a very much greater difficulty in forming an opinion upon the probable revenue of the country than used to be the case. That may arise from various causes. It has happened, no doubt, in the present case to the exceptional conditions of this rush upon dutiable articles. But that is a thing to which you are always subject. Even without any war, there may be circumstances which suggest the necessity of increasing the revenue, and, remember, it was not only on March 2nd that this rush took place. The right hon. Gentleman has told us in his speech that it began as early as the middle of January.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: On tea.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is so, but people in the month of January begin to think of what the liabilities of the country are likely to be, and of the consequences which will follow from those liabilities. Therefore, this is an element which is not confined to the present year, though, certainly, it has probably never assumed the startling proportions it has done in this year of war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the clear statement which he always gives to the House, has not given that which I should like to have seen—that is, his estimate of the revenue of the future upon the basis of existing taxation, because that is the real basis on which every estimate is, and ought to be, formed. First of all, knowing the revenue of the last year, you form your estimates upon what you expect to be the revenue of the next year on the basis of the present taxation, and according as there is a deficit or a surplus you frame your taxation. The right hon. Gentleman has not given us his estimate of Customs on the basis of the present taxation. This makes it an

extremely difficult thing for us to examine his figures. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have only a modified confidence in the continued prosperity of the country. I see he makes no alteration in the death duties. He has put them down at £13,000,000, which is lower than the actual result of their yield in the year which has just concluded by something like £1,000,000. Has he put it down a million on account of one particular death?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I did not want to repeat myself. I explained in my previous statement the very exceptional amount we have derived from the estates of millionaires, beyond the single one to which the right hon. Member refers.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I know that the right hon. Gentleman talked of a windfall that was not likely to be repeated. I do not know, but there may be a large quantity of east-windfalls in the present year. With reference to that particular windfall of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke, I think it is common knowledge that there accrue in this year two of the greatest London estates that have ever fallen or are likely to fall in. No man can criticise the calculations upon which the finance for the coming year is based upon a statement of this character. I think this statement and the conditions of its finance ought to have more mature consideration than we can bestow upon it to-day. I was about to ask, What of the balances? According to the last Return they are lower than I have ever known them—three and a half millions.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: We shall replenish them on Tuesday with four and a half millions from the War Loan.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Is that loan to be used to steady the balances?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have endeavoured to shorten the observations I had to make on this complicated statement, and I have endeavoured to deal with it, I hope, in no captious spirit. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the magnificent revenue which he has had at his disposal, and I hope there may be happier times in which he may be able to dispose of a revenue equally great for what I will call happier ends.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I agree with many of the observations of the right hon. Member for West Monmouth, all the more as, as he says, that these figures are entirely new. They are the most serious figures ever put before the House of Commons, and it is impossible to deal immediately with them. Therefore, I am merely going to pass over them in the lightest possible way. The first thing that occurs to me is the extraordinary increase in the error of calculation. It is sometimes called a surplus, but whether it is a surplus or a deficit, it is always an error. The Budget estimate of revenue for the year 1899–1900 was £111,200,000; but the realised revenue was £119,800,000, so that the total error amounted to £8,600,000. That was the amount by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was out in his calculations for the year 1899–1900. The right hon. Gentleman has explained part of it; but the larger part of that error arose out of the miscalculation of the death duties, in which there was a mistake of no less than three millions of money in a gross total of eighteen millions, or something between 25 and 33 per cent. Up to 1894 there was no item of revenue that could be so closely calculated and which left so little margin of error as the death duties; but from 1894 there has been no item of revenue that has given rise to so many errors in calculation. There has never been a less mistake than a million, and this year it is three millions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is an increase.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I do not care whether it is an increase or a decrease. When the right hon. Gentleman says that he is satisfied so long as it is an increase, and that so long as the Chancellor of the Exchequer under-estimates his revenue by three or five or eight millions, he is content, does he realise that it is quite possible that the error may be, one of these fine days, on the other side? I believe that it is just as likely that it may be. The truth is that the death duties are placed on such a basis that you rely

on a very small number of persons for a large amount of this revenue. That is a very dangerous basis, because if one or two of these persons fail to die within the year you lose an enormous amount of revenue, and your calculation is thrown out. A tenth of the number of estates pay nine-tenths of the whole duties, and if that tenth failed the whole of your calculations would be thrown out. I must say that I think the right hon. Gentleman has under-estimated the probable revenue from death duties next year. This year they produced fourteen millions payable into the Exchequer, besides four and a half millions payable to the Local Taxation Account. That is a total revenue of eighteen and a half millions. I cannot suppose myself that the death duties will show a diminution in the present financial year, as compared with the last, of so much as a million. It is perfectly true that the right hon. Gentleman had a considerable number of millionaires last year, but these millionaires are steadily on the increase. Moreover, there are two enormous estates that are going to be paid for this year, as is well known. In addition to that there is that great ally of the death duties, and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, probable disease. The right hon. Gentleman knows that in the influenza year his revenue went up enormously, and if we have another influenza year the revenue will grow up steadily. I cannot suppose any circumstances which will justify an anticipation that the death duties which gave us fourteen millions this year will only yield thirteen millions next year. This brings me to another point. I complain that the right hon. Gentleman is in the habit of under-estimating his revenue.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A very good thing, too.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: My right hon. friend says, "A very good thing." I am not sure that it would not be a matter of consequence if you had a surplus of eight or nine millions which would go towards the diminution of the National Debt. But the right hon. Gentleman always lays his hand on the surplus, and puts it to something else. Therefore it amounts to this, that you are being taxed higher than you need be in order to give the Chancellor of the Exchequer more than he actually requires. I want to call attention to the extraordinary falsification of the national accounts which results from the habit of interception. If the intercepted amount had been added to the 148 millions, the nominal expenditure of last year, there would have been a total expenditure of 156 millions; and if the expenditure of next year were treated in the same way it would amount to 173 millions. So that there is a gross total of £156,000,000 for the year that is past and of £170,000,000 for the year to come. There was once a party in this House which made itself the apostle of peace, retrenchment, and reform; the derelicts of that party are still, cast up by the winds and waves, on the opposite side of the House, but they have given up their old cry. I do not know anybody now who is for peace; I do not know any party that is for retrenchment; and those who are for reform are for Socialism. I am glad to recognise that there is one consistent advocate for retrenchment, and that is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, and as he is in earnest, I will tell him the only way, in my opinion, to insure retrenchment in this country. It is a fact that at present the country is bursting with prosperity, and people do not care how much taxes they pay, or how those taxes are spent, or what is done with them. The reason is that the vast majority of voters who send representatives to this House do not pay taxes at all, or they do not know that they pay them; and the way to raise in the country again a party interested in expenditure, and anxious to bring about retrenchment, is to make people pay taxes and make them know that they pay them. The incomes of this country amount to 1,600 millions, and a 4d. income tax upon that would give £26,000,000. If you leave out 800,000,000 of people who have less than £160 a year, 8d. on the remainder would give £26,000,000 also; but as you only levy income tax on 500,000,000, you have to put on a 1s. tax and you get the less sum of £25,000,000. If you made every man feel that he was paying his quota of taxation, then you would be forming a force which would not be long before it would produce in this House a party in favour of retrenchment. That is a suggestion which I make to

hon. Gentlemen opposite who have no cry. This is the first real Budget that has been given to us, because the other was only a temporary Budget; but, as we are told, the circumstances of this year are quite exceptional, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer has under-estimated the estate duties, and has not been quite sound in some of his financial calculations, we must forgive him, and we must take it that he is justified in taking exceptional measures to meet an emergency. Being above all anxious for retrenchment, I say, impose taxation all round in the interests of the national Treasury and economy of expenditure.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I can cordially agree with what the hon. Gentleman said in his concluding remarks, I being one of the only Members who, in season and out of season, have protested against the want of support this House now affords to any suggestion of retrenchment. The present expenditure, of course, is distinctly exceptional, and that being so I shall not deal with it. It is the automatic and steady increase of expenditure which I think the House would do well to consider. Of course, the supplemental statement which my right hon. friend has now made it is idle to criticise at this final stage of his financial scheme. No good can come of criticising the figures, which we are bound to take as he gives us. But I think, as this House is about to part with this Finance Bill, I should be justified in drawing the attention of hon. Gentlemen to the dangerously narrow basis on which our financial system rests. I do not wish to take this opportunity of putting forward any views which may be said to be of a pessimistic nature, and I am not going to suggest remedies of a protective character, but I hope my not suggesting them will not be taken as evidence that I have abandoned my views on that subject. But without reference to any system of that kind, I should like to see our financial system placed on a sounder basis. Exception has been taken to my speaking of this as a Little England Budget; but I do call it so. It is a Budget framed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer essentially without having regard to, or any idea of meeting the wishes of, the other component parts of the Empire. The great self-governing colonies have suggested time after time, and have taken steps recently in the direction of, preferential treatment being accorded to trade within the limits of the Empire. It has not been put forward by persons without authority, because these steps were founded on resolutions passed at a conference held at Ottawa in 1894, to which representatives were accredited from all parts of the Empire, and which was presided over by a special representative of Her Majesty's Government. The resolutions were adopted practically with unanimity, and are an index of the direction in which colonial opinion has moved. This was the resolution—

"That provision should be made by Imperial legislation enabling the Dependencies of the Empire to enter into agreements of commercial reciprocity, including the power of making differential tariffs with Great Britain and with one another."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, I am sorry to say, never concealed his dissent from those views, and has always adopted a frigid attitude with regard to them.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: And the Colonial Secretary, too.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER: The right hon. Gentleman opposite says, "And the Colonial Secretary, too," by which he means, I take it, that he also has adopted the frigid attitude which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has always displayed in the matter. We have heard a good deal from the Colonial Secretary of drawing closer the ties which connect the colonies with the mother country, and I certainly think that the right hon. Gentleman opposite is doing the Colonial Secretary an injustice if he says he sympathises with the frigid attitude of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Colonial Secretary said—

"There is a universal desire amongst all parts of the Empire for a closer union between the several branches, and in their opinion it is desirable, nay, it is essential, for the existence of the Empire as such. Experience has taught us that this closer union can be most hopefully approached in the first instance upon its commercial side."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: You should have heard what he said the other night.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER: Then I presume the right hon. Gentleman means

that the Colonial Secretary has reversed his opinion on that subject, but I do not read the remarks of the Colonial Secretary in the sense in which the right hon. Gentleman has done. I rather understood him to express his idea of a system on which he was emphatic—the abolition of all duties between the various portions of the Empire, but at the same time putting a tax upon all imports from countries not British. That, however, is altogether impracticable, because there is not a single colony which would fall in with such a system. The colonies depend to too large an extent for their revenue upon the levying of customs and import duties, and therefore no colony would be likely to fall in with any such system. Now the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day* took exception to my referring to this subject in connection with the duty on tea, and my right hon. friend went so far as to say that there was not one of the self-governing colonies whose representatives had adopted the resolutions I quoted which was a producer of tea; but I took the liberty of correcting my right hon. friend, because, as a matter of fact, the tea-growing industry of Natal is one of which very great hopes are entertained, and one to which its Government attaches great importance. Now I might remind the House that the principles embodied in the resolutions of the Ottawa Conference were urged with still greater emphasis at a conference of the Colonial Premiers held in this country during the Jubilee celebrations in 1897. The Colonial Premiers in conference in June, 1897, passed the following resolution—

"That in the hope of improving the trade relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies, the Premiers present undertake to confer with their colleagues with the view of seeing whether such a result can be properly secured by a preference given by the Colonies to the products of the United Kingdom."

Notwithstanding my disclaimer in connection with direct taxation I might remind the House that the colonies have in some instances given effect to this resolution. One is the Government of Canada, the head of which within a few days of the passing of the resolution was personally decorated with the gold medal of the Cobden Club; this recently decorated gold medallist, who was a party to this resolution, who I believe in fact took the chair at the meeting at which that resolution was unanimously passed, has given effect to that resolution, the Finance Minister of Canada having this very year introduced a Budget under the provisions of which products of the United Kingdom, and of such colonies as conform to the resolution, were to be admitted not only at an advantage of 25 per cent. less than foreign goods, which advantage was accorded two years ago amidst lively demonstrations of patriotic feeling amongst all parties in Canada, but are from the present time to be admitted at an advantage of 33⅓ per cent. For every two dollars paid on imported British goods three dollars would be paid on foreign. That is the Budget of the gold medallist of the Cobden Club, and I am bound to say from an Imperial standpoint that it is a very great improvement on the Budget of my right hon. friend, who might, I think, with advantage go to the shrine of the Cobden Club, and if he follows this example need not despair of being decorated with the gold medal. This is a question which has made enormous strides throughout the Empire during the last few years. When it was first brought forward in the Canadian Legislature it was a party matter: the Liberal party of that day did not identify themselves with it. What has happened since? All parties are so enthusiastic in its favour that when the recent Budget was brought in members of all parties rose in their places and joined in the National Anthem. Moreover, the House must bear in mind that Canada is by no means alone in this patriotic financial action, as the principle in question was recognised by all the Premiers of the colonies assembled in London three years ago. During the same time the Government of this country have not been altogether inactive on the question, and I should be doing them a wrong if I did not remind the House that the Government have abolished the treaties with Germany and Belgium which precluded our entering into these reciprocal relations with our colonies. The Government has removed the shackles from our hands, and we are free to move, and my right hon. friend would find the whole of the Empire at his back if he were to make a step in this direction. It was unfortunately, as we know, not so long

* See page 387 of this volume

ago the fashion to treat the colonies as if they were no concern of ours; we went our way and left them to go theirs, and if those ways led to different courses it did not matter. That is not the view held now. When even gold medallists of the Cobden Club come forward and identify themselves with this movement what ground can my right hon. friend have for holding aloof from it? It may be said that the exceptional circumstances of this year are not favourable to embarking in any departure from our financial system, but I cannot recognise that. I believe it would be well received throughout the Empire, and I hope further time will not be allowed to go by without some step being taken in regard to it. If further time is allowed to go by great disappointment will be raised in the colonies, and great temptation offered by other communities who are notoriously desirous to enter into fiscal relations with portions of the colonial Empire, to the prejudice of the mother country. I hope that this niggling and peddling system of finance, without any reference to the promotion of trade between this country and its colonies, or the growth of food in this country, will be abolished in future. The present Budget is one without grasp; the right hon. Gentleman has put burdens on the backs of the people, and is raising money in the old way without any regard to national opinion, and I hope that we have seen the last of these peddling Budgets.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): We cannot fail to recognise that we are in a most serious situation as regards the financial system of this country when such a statement as that presented to us to-night has to be made in a great hurry on the Third Reading of the Finance Bill. I am glad to see that a great many hon. Members have recognised what struck me at the commencement, that this Budget was brought in, and that great burdens were thrown on the public without due consideration. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a greater under-estimate than has ever been made before. I think this is a very serious matter. One conclusion that arises from it is that last year we had a peddling and unsatisfactory Budget, disturbing trade and imposing many fresh burdens; we had a number of new taxes raising about a million, and we now find that the revenue was under-estimated by £6,000,000, and that all the new taxes were unnecessary. I do not think that the figures we have had placed before us to-night really rest on a sound basis, and to illustrate that I point to one matter. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that these payments of duty commenced in the month of January, and he mentioned tea particularly. I wish to call attention to one incident which occurred in that business which really accounts for a large anticipatory payment, and at the same time does not justify the Chancellor in drawing the conclusion he has drawn. There is a fashion among certain tea companies of rivalling each other in regard to the amount of the duty cheques they paid on tea. One was £85,000 because a rival trader had paid £75,000 before. These large cheques were merely anticipations, and this was done for the purpose of advertisement, although it seems to me a very foolish practice. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is, therefore, not justified in saying that the payments were made merely to anticipate the Budget. When we compare the amount paid into the Exchequer in the last week of the year ending 31st March with the week before we cannot help being struck by the fact that a very much smaller amount was paid during the last week of the year. No money was paid in from the Post Office or the Telegraph Office, and a very small sum from Customs and Excise, while £4,750,000 was paid in the week before. That makes me think that we have carried over, from the year ending 31st March, quite as large an amount of revenue that will give benefit to the next year as any of the anticipatory payments of Customs and Excise to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has alluded. If this be true, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is greatly miscalculating his revenue.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is not true.

*MR. LOUGH: I now come to a firmer basis of fact. We have had nearly £10,000,000, one way or another, of taxation revenue more than was expected in the year just closed. I have stated on this subject before that with such a gigantic revenue the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have been much more sparing in the imposition of new taxes. I said then that the only new

tax required was 2d. on the income tax. No one made the slightest response to my suggestion. I am strongly of the same opinion, that with such an excess revenue the Chancellor should have hesitated before imposing the new taxes he has imposed. We can now see that we ended the past year with £10,000,000 available for the war without a single new tax, and there would have been £11,000,000 probably available next year, so that without any new taxes we might have £30,000,000 in three years available for the war. What is the spirit animating the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this matter? The House appears to think that the taxpayer makes no sacrifice if he is not called upon to pay new taxes. This is a great fallacy. It is one of the many financial fallacies that have become common in this country. The taxpayer will in the first place have to sacrifice the relief to which he would have been entitled. The right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chancellor alluded to the splendid relief that might have been given if £6,000,000 or £9,000,000 had been applied to the relief of taxation. The taxpayer has lost that. Everybody has to make a great sacrifice in connection with the war. There have been large subscriptions to provide for the dependents of those who have been killed or wounded in the war. There has been a sacrifice of money in the country in the withdrawal of breadwinners who have fought the battles. There is scarcely a family in the land that has not made a sacrifice, and in such a year it would have been a far more excellent thing to have avoided an increase of taxation rather than add to the many burdens to which I have alluded. Practically every trade in the country from which revenue is raised has been disturbed by this Budget. The Chancellor has promised to take off these taxes as soon as he can. There is a great disturbance to trade in the way of taking off taxes—perhaps it is nearly as great as in putting them on. These important industries should, I think, receive more attention from the right hon. Gentleman than they have hitherto done. I desire to make a protest against the ready way in which the Chancellor has put heavy burdens on the country, when I think they might to a large extent have been avoided. I desire also to allude to the protest made by many of my hon. friends from Ireland. In regard to Ireland I think the protest made against every one of these taxes forms one of the most extraordinary incidents in the finance of this country. Nine-tenths of the hon. Members from Ireland opposed the imposition of any one of these taxes, and I think there is a great deal to be said for the contention that they are unnecessary. They protested, on grounds which seemed to them very good, against the imposition of these burdens. No British Member paid the least attention to the Irish Members. It is sometimes said that taxation without representation is a great evil; but there is a greater evil than that—and that is the paying no attention to the constitutional complaint and protest of people who appear to enjoy constitutional and representative rights. All the hon. Members devoted their attention to was their own country, and their voice was not heard in regard to it. That is a very serious situation. I would like to put this question: what do you think that, within the limits of the Constitution, Irishmen should do next? They practically represent the whole country unanimously, and no attention has been paid to them. I desire simply, for my own part, to protest in conclusion, as I did in the beginning, against this Budget. I think a great deal more money is to be raised than is necessary. It has caused a great disturbance of the commerce of this country, and I think it will prove very oppressive to many who have quite sufficient burdens to bear.

*MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I rise to ask if the Government will consider the important question of the graduation of the income tax. I made a similar appeal some three years ago to the Chancellor, and it received a favourable response. The Chancellor of the Exchequer extended the principle of graduation by exemption in a manner that gave satisfaction, I believe, to both sides of the House as far as it went. But now that the income tax has been raised to 1s. in the £ the question has become more urgent than before. I have from time to time received a considerable number of letters on the subject from people all over the country who are interested in it. It has been stated over and over again by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, and I make the same complaint, that the larger

incomes are not taxed in proportion to their ability to bear taxation. I admit that considerable steps in that direction have been taken within the last few years, but the disproportion still remains, and it is that disproportion which it is the duty of the Government to remove or minimise as far as possible. An income tax of 1s. in the £ bears very hardly indeed upon persons with small incomes. I make that statement taking into account the deductions now allowed in respect of them. But there is a further question which affects the bulk of the nation. If a careful inquiry were made into the amount which a man receiving wages of £1 a week has to pay in taxation, and if what he has to pay were compared, let us say, with what is paid by persons receiving salaries of £100, £200, £300, and £500 a year, it would be found that the working man in proportion to the salary he receives, pays taxation enormously in excess of that which is paid by persons in a better financial position than himself. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has done a little to remedy these inequalities of taxation, and I am grateful to him for what little he has done, but there is still a vast field for the exercise of his reforming talent in that direction. I recognise that everything cannot be done at once in this regard, but I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, as I appealed to him on a former occasion, to consider whether, in the event of his being in the position in which he now finds himself twelve months hence, he will not propose to the House of Commons a very different system of taxation indeed from that which now prevails in regard to its incidence upon different classes of the community. I would ask him to distribute the burden more equitably. I agree entirely with the principle that every class in the community ought to bear its full and equal share of taxation. All that I ask is that its incidence should be proportionate to the means of the taxpayer, and in making this appeal I believe I have, although I only speak as an individual, behind me a large body of opinion and sentiment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 103; Noes, 16. (Division List No. 99.)

AYES.

Arrol, Sir William
Austin, Sir John (Yorkshire)
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt Hn. St. John
Caldwell, James
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm
Chamberlain, J Austen (Worc'r
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Colville, John
Cooke, C W Radcliffe (Hereford)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Curzon, Viscount
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dewar, Arthur
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Faber, George Denison
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (CityofLond.
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D (Wednesbury
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hazell, Walter
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Houston, R. P.
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Sir E Durning- (Corn
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thos. (Londonderry)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Killop, James
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Monckton, Edward Philip
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute)
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse
Schwann, Charles E.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Steadman, William Charles
Strauss, Arthur
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Ure, Alexander
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm
Wyndham, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Austin, M. (Limerick, W.)
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Doogan, P. C.
Kilbride Denis
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Dermott, Patrick
Molloy, Bernard Charles
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. James O'Connor.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

POLICE RESERVISTS (ALLOWANCES) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

NAVAL RESERVE (MOBILISATION) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) objected to the practice of the Government moving important Bills after midnight, or as on a previous occasion with this Bill, within a few minutes of that hour, without offering any explanation or affording any opportunity for discussion. Under the system of party Government, the duty of criticism constitutionally devolved on the Opposition, not in their own party interest, but in the interests of the country, so that no legislation should be passed which had not been well considered and carefully criticised. The Bill had reference to the calling out into actual service of the volunteer forces of the Naval Reserve. By the Act of 1859, the number of such forces is not to exceed 30,000, whilst the number actually authorised by Parliament for the year now current is 27,700, being an increase of only fifty over the past year, notwithstanding that the number of officers and men of the Fleet have been increased this year by 3,499, and now stands at 82,821. They were thus dealing not only with a large body of men, but with a body of men which had not yet attained the maximum of forty-one years ago, which was not increasing proportionately to the increase of the Fleet, and which was a force which should be strictly reserved for being called into actual service only at a time of great emergency or national danger. The Bill had nothing to do with the annual drill and training, which were left entirely, as at present, to the Admiralty. The calling out of the Naval Reserve Volunteers to actual service meant a considerable sacrifice to the men. It was a great loss to wives and families, and, in many cases, the loss of permanent situations. The power ought not, therefore, to be lightly exercised. By Section 4 of the Act of 1859, the sole power and prerogative of calling out the Naval Reserve Volunteers is vested in Her Majesty, which, of course, means the Cabinet as a whole. Her Majesty may call out as many or such part of them as she may deem necessary. But before even Her Majesty may call them out, the occasion must first be communicated to Parliament if Parliament be sitting, or be declared in Council and notified by Proclamation if Parliament be not sitting or in being. Once the Volunteers are so called out, the Act of 1859 devolves upon the Lord High Admiral the duty of making all the necessary arrangements for collecting the men and utilising their services. The important point to observe is that it is Her Majesty who fixes the number which, in her opinion, is necessary to be called out for the particular occasion, the Admiralty having no discretion but being bound to call out the number so fixed. If it should be necessary to call out more Volunteers, the same form has to be gone through, the prerogative of calling out and the duty and responsibility of fixing the number of the additional men to be called out resting with Her Majesty. Nor is there any reason why the solemnity, publicity, and responsibility of calling out the additional number should not be observed. Indeed, it was the more necessary in the case of the additional number, as, obviously, the crisis must have become more acute, whilst the country will be drawing more largely on what is a force reserved for a time of national danger or great emergency. Nor is there anything in the slightest degree cumbrous in the

calling out the additional number required. If Parliament is sitting, Parliament has to be acquainted with the fact, an operation not only extremely simple in itself, and involving no unnecessary delay, but a most proper thing to do. If Parliament is not sitting, then the additional number of men are declared by an Order in Council, very easily obtained, no matter where Her Majesty may be, and is made public by Proclamation. In fact, so far as publicity and notice to the men are concerned, the Proclamation would appear in the press all over the country the next morning, before any call or summons to the service by the Admiralty could possibly reach them. The present Act had been in operation for forty-one years, and up to the present no difficulty had been felt, nor had any complaint been made with the existing law. The change proposed by the Bill would seem to have suggested itself owing to the fact that under the Act of 1882 calling out the Army Reserves, Her Majesty has power by the Proclamation to order a Secretary of State—

"From time to time to give, and when given to revoke or vary such directions as may seem necessary or proper for calling out the forces or force mentioned in the Proclamation, or all or any of the men belonging thereto."

Finding this power of delegation in the case of the Army, the Admiralty evidently discover for the first time that they require this power in the case of the Navy, and that it is impossible longer to get on without it, although no difficulty has been known or felt during the last forty-one years. The Admiralty wish given to them the powers which are given to the War Department; but are the Admiralty willing to have the restrictions placed upon the calling out of the Naval Reserve Volunteers which are imposed in the case of the Army Reserves? Therein lies the difference between the two cases, and accounts for the difference in powers. As he had pointed out, Her Majesty can call out the Naval Reserve Volunteers "on such occasions as she deems fit." On the other hand, by Section 12 of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, Her Majesty can only call out the Army Reserves "in case of imminent national danger or of great emergency," and the occasion must not only first be communicated to Parliament if Parliament be sitting, or declared in Council and notified by Proclamation if Parliament be not sitting, but by Section 13—

"Whenever Her Majesty orders the Army Reserve and Militia Reserve, or either of them, to be called out on permanent service, if Parliament be then separated by such adjournment or prorogation as will not expire within ten days, a Proclamation shall be issued for the meeting of Parliament within ten days, and Parliament shall accordingly meet and sit upon the day appointed by such Proclamation, and shall continue to sit and act in like manner as if it had stood adjourned or prorogued to the same day."

Obviously there is a great difference between the delegation to a Secretary of State to call out all or any of the Army Reserves called out by Royal Proclamation in a time "of imminent national danger or of great emergency," and when, if Parliament be not then sitting, Parliament must be called together within ten days, and the necessity for any such delegation in the case of the Naval Reserve Volunteers whom Her Majesty may call out, to whatever extent she pleases, "on such occasions as she deems fit," without being limited to times "of imminent national danger or great emergency," and without being under any obligation to call Parliament together.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present (Mr. STEADMAN, Tower Hamlets, Stepney). House counted, and forty Members being found present,

*MR. CALDWELL (continuing) said it would be absurd to have to call Parliament together every time that it might be found necessary to call out any additional number of men. Delegation as regards numbers, whilst thus appropriate in the case of the Army Reserves is not appropriate to the case of the Navy Reserves, not fenced with the same restrictions, and under no necessity to call Parliament together. Parliament has wisely imposed upon Her Majesty the prerogative, duty, and responsibility, not only of calling out the Naval Reserve Volunteers, but of fixing the number which should be called out from time to time, a new proclamation being required every time an additional number of men are called out. The calling out of any additional number by Her Majesty, however, is encumbered with no unnecessary formalities, and produces no delay, whilst it is but right and proper, wherever an addi-

tional number is called out, that the fact should be intimated to Parliament and to the country by Royal Proclamation, and not left to be carried into effect by any secret orders from the Admiralty. At present no more than the number which, in the opinion of Her Majesty, is actually required can be called out, and the Admiralty has no discretion but to call them out. The Bill, however, would enable Her Majesty to call out the whole of the Naval Reserve Volunteers, or any large portion of them, even although the occasion might not require a call out of more than 5,000 or 1,000 men. It would always be explained that, although a larger number were nominally called out than might be deemed necessary at the time, yet it was not intended actually to call out the full number, but only a very restricted number, which the Admiralty had power to do. What he feared might be done in practice was that the whole Naval Reserve Volunteers might be called out in the Royal proclamation, even although a small number only were considered necessary, and that once such a proclamation had been issued, the Admiralty would thereafter have unlimited power from time to time to call out additional numbers as they might think fit without acquainting Parliament or the country, thus depleting that part of the naval defence of the country which was intended to be used only in a time of imminent national danger or of great emergency. He protested against giving such a power to a mere Department of the State. Circumstances of late years had shown that we ought not to give unlimited power to the Admiralty by, first of all, getting an order from the Queen to call out the Reserve forces, and then allowing the Admiralty to call out as many as they please, because the Fleet might at any time be used without the knowledge of Parliament for many purposes, and sometimes for making a demonstration. An Emperor might send a telegram, and then the fleet might be mobilised and the Volunteers called out; something might take place in China, and all the Admiralty would have to do would be to get a proclamation from the Queen, and then they would have the whole thing in their hands. It was in the interests both of the Reserves and the country that a check should be kept upon the Admiralty, and that is why he objected to this Bill and insisted upon keeping the power where it was. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. COLVILLE (Lanark, N.E.): I beg leave to second my hon. friend's proposal.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): This Bill is brought forward in order to enable the Admiralty to call out such a number as they may require. The object of the Bill is precisely to prevent that which the hon. Gentleman supposes will be its result. This Bill is simply to give to the Admiralty the same power as is already possessed by the War Office in regard to the calling out of the Army Reserve. It is simply this, that after the Queen with all the responsibility provided by section 4 of the Act of 1859—not one jot of which responsibility will be removed by this Act—has directed the Naval Volunteers to be called out, the Admiralty may give directions as to the number to be called out, so that it will not be necessary to bring all the Volunteers away from their work, and send them back again when they are not all required. I can assure the hon. Member that the Act of 1859 will not be abrogated by anything contained in the Bill before the House but it will apply in exactly the same way as before, the only difference being that the Admiralty will have discretion as to whether they will call out 10,000 or 15,000 men.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I am indebted to my hon. friend the Member for Mid Lanark for the industry and acumen he has brought to bear on the elucidation of this Bill. It appears to me that two points arise in connection with it; firstly, the intention of the Bill; and secondly, whether the intention is expressed in the language of

the Bill. The intention of the Bill as explained by the Attorney General corresponds very much with what was laid down by my hon. friend. The law according to the Act of 1859 is that the Queen after signifying her intention by message to Parliament or by proclamation may call into active service the whole or any portion of the Royal Naval Volunteers called in the Estimates the Naval Reserve. The Queen having called out the whole or any part of these Volunteers the Admiralty is then authorised by the Act of 1859 to call them into active service. What is intended now, I understand, is that instead of the present system the Admiralty are to be empowered within, I assume, the limits of the Queen's proclamation or message to Parliament to call into active service such portion of the Naval Volunteers as may seem to them to be required, and at a later period may call, always within the limits of the proclamation or message, a further portion if required. So that instead of there being only one order and one proclamation declaring the number to be called into active service, there will be a governing order, which naturally will take the largest margin possible. In other words, instead of calling out 20,000 men power may be taken to call out the whole of the Reserve, and then the Admiralty can call out 10,000 to-day and 5,000 or 10,000 six months later. That is the system now proposed instead of the system established by the Act of 1859, which has remained unchanged and uncriticised all these years. What is the reason for this change? We on this side are supposed to be a party favourable to legislative change, but on this occasion we are opposed to a legislative change for which I am bound to say the Attorney General has not given any adequate reason. Perhaps it was only his duty to describe the nature of the change, but I cannot myself discover why this change should be brought about, and my hon. friend has suggested many reasons against it. There is one further point not mentioned by my hon. friend which occurs to me. Assuming that I am correct in describing this Bill as one to give power to the Crown to make a governing proclamation which the Admiralty may administer in detail by instalments, I would ask the House to consider that we are not dealing with the same class of men as the Army Reserve. The Naval Reserve is composed of seafaring men, and we are by this Bill putting on them a burden which they may not have to bear, because their services may not be required. Under the present system 10,000 men are called out by proclamation, and the Admiralty proceeds to call them out. The remaining men are under no obligation except that contained in the Act of Parliament. They are under contingent liability if you like; but under the system now proposed the men will be under special notice, which must necessarily affect the conditions of their employment. That appears to me to be a practical objection outweighing any good I can see in the proposal. Perhaps the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to tell the House the practical reasons for this proposal. I can conceive one good reason, namely, that it is just as well to have a margin, that the number of men wanted is not actually known, and that, although only 5,000 may be wanted, it is just as well to have power to call out a greater number. That would appear to be the main reason for this change, but I do not think it overweighs the considerations against it. Subject to anything that the First Lord of the Admiralty may say, I should be inclined to agree with my hon. friend in offering opposition to this Bill; but looking at the Bill, I am obliged to say that I am not clear that it affects any alteration in the law whatever. It is a very curious Bill, and there are many things in it which will have to be looked after in Committee. The phrase "called out" appears to me to be new in a Bill, but I will not detain the House on that question now. If we compare the Bill as it is with the Act as it stands, it is a little difficult to see that any important alteration of the law is made at all. The Act of 1859 says that the Queen may by proclamation call out all or any of the Naval Reserves, and a subsequent section orders the Admiralty to call them out. The Bill simply says that when the Queen has declared that all or any of the Naval Volunteers shall be called out for active service, then Her Majesty may authorise the Admiralty to call all or any as may be required. Instead of the Queen ordering all or any of the Naval Volunteers to be called, and the Admiralty as a mere matter of machinery calling them out, the Bill provides that the Admiralty

Mr. Edmund Robertson.

may give directions as to the calling out of the men, always within the limits of the proclamation. That appears to me to be a perfectly fair and proper interpretation of the Bill. The Attorney General's explanation was characterised by his usual clearness and candour, but it does not lie with him to say why the change is proposed, and I am sure the House will be glad to hear the reasons for it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I shall be very glad to give the House the reasons why this Bill is introduced, and as I will prove to the House, the object of the Bill is the very opposite to that suggested. It is for the convenience quite as much of the Royal Naval Reserve as of the Admiralty. Suppose that the country were in such a position that we wanted 5,000 men certain, under the existing law there is scarcely any doubt that we would call for a much larger number, because otherwise if we wanted another 5,000 men we should have to have a new proclamation and we should have to trouble Her Majesty and to have Councils at a time of national emergency, which would be very inconvenient in every way. Therefore, under the present Act a very much larger number of men than is actually wanted at a particular moment would be called for in the proclamation which Her Majesty would be advised to make. For any Government to be constantly admitting, with all the pomp and ceremony of a proclamation, that they want 5,000 men more, is not desirable at a time of national emergency. It would be far more convenient to have a larger number in the proclamation, and then to call them out as they are wanted — 5,000 at a time or 3,000 at a time—sparing the men, which, under the present system, we are not able to do. Under the present system it has, indeed, already happened in one case in the Army—in the Army Reserve Department — that when there was a possibility of a certain number of men being wanted, the men were called up and put under immediate liability, and then, as they were not wanted they were sent home again. It is precisely to avoid that inconvenience that we have introduced this Bill. It is that we may be able to call the men up as they are wanted, and not according to the necessities of a proclamation, which cannot be final. I think the House will see that the constant issuing of proclamations is very undesirable, and that the liability put on the men by these constant proclamations would be as great and greater than the liability under this measure. If I were a Naval Reserve man I am quite certain I should prefer this Bill—I will not say its theoretical action, but its certain application in practice. I can assure the House that that is the only object of the Bill. It may be asked, the old system having gone so long, why change it now? Because we have been looking most carefully into our system of mobilisation, and we have found that more men are called out under proclamation than are wanted at the moment, and we want to avoid that. We do not want to avoid any communications with Parliament, because Parliament will be notified by the usual methods. We are anxious not to be obliged to call out a greater number of men than is wanted at the moment, thereby causing unnecessary inconvenience to the men themselves. Therefore, although theoretically there may be something in the argument put with great ability by hon. and learned Members opposite, in fact I can assure the House that the Bill will be better than the old Act. With reference to the wording of the Bill, it is rather a matter for lawyers to decide, but the Attorney General assures me that the language is perfectly correct, but if it is not correct it will be altered. I hope the House will not refuse to pass this perfectly innocent measure, both for the convenience of the Royal Naval Reserve and for the easier administration of our Reserves in time of emergency.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I look with great jealousy on any Bill connected with the Royal Naval Reserve, because I have always taken a special interest in that body; but having looked at this Bill I am bound to say that there is no real ground for the objections advanced on the other side of the House. Let the House look at the present situation. Section 4 of the Act of 1859 states that it shall be lawful for Her Majesty to call into active service so many of the Naval Volunteers as Her Majesty may deem necessary. Under the Act there is

power to call out all or any of the Royal Naval Reserve, and, the "all or any" having been called out, it then rests with the Admiralty to carry out Her Majesty's instructions. This Bill does not substitute any other authority for that in the Act. It simply provides that when Her Majesty has done the act contemplated by the section power is given to the Admiralty, which, however, does not come into existence until what is contemplated by Section 4 of the Act of 1859 has been actually effected. When that act has been done by Her Majesty, and when the order has been communicated to Parliament, if Parliament is sitting, then this Bill will come into operation. Anything which has to be done now will not be unnecessary after the Bill passes. All that has to be done now will have to be done in the future, and the only effect of the Bill will be that instead of making it absolutely necessary for the Admiralty to call out the exact number of men named in the proclamation, the Admiralty will have power to call out the men in such numbers as may be convenient to the Admiralty and to the men. Is that unreasonable? It must stand to reason that the Admiralty will not call out more men than are required, because the First Lord of the Admiralty has a wholesome dread of the hon. Gentleman opposite and his Scotch colleagues, and is not likely to propose higher estimates than are required. It may be desirable to call out 5,000 men now, 5,000 more in three months, and another 5,000 in six months. How much better that would be than calling out the whole 15,000 at once, thereby preventing a larger number of men from shipping for distant voyages. Is it unreasonable to give this power to the Admiralty, which is exactly analogous to the power possessed by the Secretary of State for War? All who love the sea and wish to magnify the Navy should join together in claiming from time to time for the First Lord of the Admiralty and his Board of Naval Advisers equal powers to those given to the Secretary of State for War. That is practically what this Bill proposes. I came to the Bill with jealousy; it seemed to me in one of its aspects as though it would somewhat curtail the powers of Parliament, and as likely to inflict some disadvantage or inconvenience on the Naval Reserve men which I should strongly resist; but really having looked into it I see it is for the convenience of the Admiralty, and for increasing the dignity of the Admiralty by giving it power now given to the Secretary of State for War, who always considers himself superior to the First Lord of the Admiralty, whereas he is far inferior in connection with the national defence. Seeing that the Bill is for the good of the State and for the convenience both of the Admiralty and the Royal Naval Reserve, I have entirely divested myself of any suspicion I had, and I do think the House ought to pass this Bill.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I cannot agree that the Bill is quite the innocent measure it is represented to be, and I can quite imagine that it may inflict great hardship on Naval Reserve men. I have an idea why this Bill is being brought forward, and I do not quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman on that point.

MR. GOSCHEN: Why not? I have stated the truth.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I do not deny that. I make no suggestion to the contrary. What I say is this, that the Admiralty have some considerable difficulty in getting firemen and stokers at the present time. I know they can get plenty of men who are not accustomed to stoking work on board vessels, they can get the raw material, but they have some difficulty in getting trained stokers. If this Bill is sanctioned by the House of Commons it will be possible for the Admiralty to call on the stokers alone without interfering with the able seamen's section at all. Again, there is no mention in the Bill of the matter having to be brought before Parliament, whereas the Act says that that must be done, and therefore Parliament could have something to say to it.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The hon. Gentleman is quite under a mistake. The reference to Parliament is just the same as under the Act.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I understand this Bill repeals the Act of 1859. If that is not so, I do not see why the Bill is brought forward at all, because the Admiralty have already sufficient power.

I can see that some hardship will be inflicted on the Naval Reserve men if this Bill passes. The Naval Reserve is not divided into sections like the Army Reserve, and I should therefore like to know how a section can be called up. There will be a general proclamation issued that the Naval Reserve is to mobilise, and a large number of men, not knowing what section is to be called up, will be delayed in getting employment, because many of the men go on long voyages, for twelve or eighteen months, and they may have some difficulty in getting ships, as they may be told that their services may be required by the Admiralty. For that reason I strongly oppose the change, and as an ex-Naval Reserve man—I have served five years in the Reserve—I should resent the conditions on which I joined being altered by Parliament without being myself consulted as one of the men. I do not think any substantial reason has been given for this change, and I cannot get away from the impression that it is for the purpose of giving the Admiralty power to call up an additional supply of stokers.

MR. GOSCHEN: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the question of the supply of stokers never entered my mind, or the minds of any of my advisers, for one moment. The point is absolutely without foundation, and I hope the hon. Gentleman will accept my explanation that that is not the cause of the introduction of this Bill.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I really cannot understand the objection which is being raised to this Bill, because it appears to me to be simply a matter of convenience. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Middlesbrough said it would inflict great hardship on the men, but he did not give a single scrap of evidence in support of that statement. I think the Bill will be an advantage to Naval Reserve men. The Act states that any man called out is liable for a year's service, and if the Admiralty call out more than they want many men will imagine that they are required for one year, when, as a matter of fact, they are not required at all. I see no objection whatever to the measure.

MR. STEADMAN: I would like to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is not the fact that at the present time there is a difficulty in manning the ships of the Fleet either with seamen or stokers?

MR. GOSCHEN: No, Sir.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside): I have tried to listen as carefully as I could to the right hon. the First Lord of the Admiralty, and I gather that the Act of 1859, and all the machinery required by the Act, is left untouched, and that as a matter of fact the only change is when you come to the question of direction by the Admiralty. This is a point that I want cleared up in my own mind. As I understood him, the First Lord of the Admiralty said that under the present Act the number of Naval Reservists which Her Majesty is advised to call out must be called out; and then the First Lord said that as a business matter you should always call out more than you actually want; you must always allow some margin. My fear is that under the present Bill there might be a tendency on the part of the Admiralty, at certain times, to call out a very much larger number of men than they actually require, as a kind of demonstration against other naval Powers.

MR. GOSCHEN: It is just the opposite. Under the present Act the tendency would be to call out more men than we wanted. Under the new proposal the Admiralty would only call out those men whom we really want. That is our object.

MR. MADDISON: One does not like to differ from the First Lord of the Admiralty as to what he would do; but I still adhere to my opinion that under the present system you might call out, as a business matter, a larger number of men than you want. Seeing that the total number you require can be called out by instalments as you require them, I cannot see how the First Lord can say that the system operates in the opposite direction. I am bound to say, however, that to the Naval Reserve men it does not make much difference which system is in force.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I agree that the new system proposed by the Bill under discussion will lead to administrative benefit in the Admiralty, and be a convenience to the men themselves. My hon. friend behind me seemed to be a little afraid that if a proclamation was issued by Her Majesty calling out the Reserve and Volunteers for active service, the Admiralty might, for some purpose with which Parliament was thoroughly acquainted, call out a small force, and then, when some totally new question or some difficulty had arisen with a foreign Power, call out a larger portion. I think if my hon. friend will look at the wording of the Naval Volunteers Act he will see that Her Majesty is to communicate the occasion of calling out to Parliament, if Parliament is sitting, or declare it in Council if Parliament is not sitting. And therefore it would not be possible to call out the remainder of the Reserves without either a declaration in Parliament or in Council.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Hear, hear!

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: There is one point which I would ask the First Lord to carefully consider, as it occurs to me there may be some force in it. After a proclamation has been issued calling out the whole of the Reserve, whereas the Admiralty only require a small portion, it may be only a small squadron, the rest of the Royal Naval Reserve having been called into actual service by proclamation might have some difficulty in obtaining employment at sea, and so of pursuing their ordinary avocation. I think that is a subject worthy of the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty, although I do not see how they would be in a worse position than they are now. Before I sit down I venture to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman contemplates further legislation this session in regard to the plans for strengthening the Reserves which he foreshadowed in his speech in the early period of the session, or whether those plans can be accomplished without further legislation.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): There is a lingering suspicion on this side of the House that this Bill dispenses with the notification to Parliament. I will put it directly to the Attorney General, "Does it?"

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I have already answered that question twice; but I have no objection to state for the third time that it does not.

MR. GOSCHEN: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clitheroe, I may say that a plan in regard to strengthening the Naval Reserve is developing. It is difficult to express myself without showing what the plan is, but I may say that it may require further legislation.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 30th April.

LAND CHARGES BILL [Lords].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

*MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): This Bill relates to England only, and is of a highly technical character. Although consisting of only six clauses and a schedule, it deals with and repeals, in a greater or lesser degree, no fewer than ten different Acts of Parliament. The present Bill was a great improvement on the Bills introduced by the Government in former years, thus illustrating the advantage of not rushing legislation, but of having a preliminary discussion in one session, and of framing and passing a new Bill in a subsequent session, in the light of the criticism which a former Bill may have received. Whilst the Bill of last year left the transference of the business of the registrar of judgments to be carried out by Order of the Lord Chancellor, by the present Bill, Parliament makes the transfer itself, leaving to the Lord Chancellor, by Order, to make the necessary changes. Consequently, the schedule contained the abolition of the office of registrar of judgments. A question might arise whether the new arrange-

nts under Clause 1 do not involve an litional burden on the Exchequer, re- ring a money resolution in Committee, l whether an addition to Clause 1 is required that the expenses are to be vided out of moneys to be annually ed by Parliament. The Bill of last r dealt also with charges on land respect of land improvement, t the present Bill does not deal with se, the same having been dealt with in Land Improvement Act of last sion. Clause 2 of the Bill deals with operation of a judgment or recog- ance as a charge upon land. In con- ering the effect of this clause, it is essary to review the law on the sub- t which existed prior to the passing of Land Charges Registration and arches Act, 1888, and as the law sently exists consequent on the changes de by that Act. Section 13 of the Judg- nts Act, 1838, enacts that all judgments tered, or to be hereafter entered, in r Majesty's Supreme Courts at West- nster, shall operate as a charge upon all ds which the debtor shall at the time entering up such judgment, or at any e afterwards, be seized, possessed, or titled for any estate or interest at law in equity, and the same shall be as ding as against the person against om judgment is entered, and all persons iming under him after such judgment, also against the issue of his body, and other persons whom without the con- t of any other person, he might cut or debar from any remainder of such ds. The judgment creditor is to have h and the same remedies in a Court of uity against the lands as if the persons ainst whom judgment was entered d by writing agreed to charge the same th the amount of such judgment debt, d interest thereon. There are two pro- oes—first, that proceedings in equity not to be taken until the expiry of e year from the time of entering up judgment; and, second, that the lgment is not to operate as a preference bankruptcy unless such judgment shall ve been entered up one year at least fore bankruptcy. By Section 18 of the t of 1838, decrees and orders of the urt of Equity are to have effect as arges upon land in the same way as lgments; by Section 21 of the same t, the like effect is to be given to lgments of the Court of Common Pleas the Counties Palatine of Lancaster and Durham; and by Section 2 of the Judgments Act, 1855, the like effect is conferred upon the decrees and orders of the Court of Chancery of the Counties Palatine. Judgments of the inferior Court when removed to the Supreme Court also have the like effect. The foregoing sections of the Acts of 1838 and 1855, so far as the effect has been described, were not repealed by the Land Charges Registration Act, 1888, nor are they repealed by the present Bill. Whilst judgments and decrees and orders of the Supreme Courts of Law and Equity in England, including those of the Counties Palatine, had and are still to have the effect mentioned of a charge upon land, it was provided by Section 19 of the Judgments Act, 1838, that no judgment, decree, or order was to affect real estate, otherwise than as before the Act, as against purchasers, mortgagees, or creditors, until the same had been registered. Registration is prescribed as the entering of certain particulars in a memorandum or minute which is left with the Senior Master of the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster, who enters the particulars in a book arranged in alphabetical order in name of the person whose estate is to be affected. A similar registration in a book to be kept by the Senior Master of the Court of Common Pleas was necessary under Section 8 of the Judgments Act, 1839; the Law of Property Amendment Act, 1860; the Judgments Act, 1864; and the Crown Suits, etc., Act, 1865; in order to make effectual as against *bonâ fide* purchasers for valuable consideration, or mortgagees or creditors, any judgment for debt in favour of the Crown and other persons, and of hereditary titles or acceptance of office from or under the Crown. To be effectual as against purchasers, mortgagees, or creditors, in the case of land situate within the Counties Palatine of Lancaster and Durham, a similar registration had to be made in a book kept by the prothonotary of each county in which the lands were situated. The fee for registration is fixed by statute at 5s., and in some cases 2s. 6d. in the case of the books kept in the Court of Common Pleas, and at 2s. 6d. in the case of each of the Courts Palatine. The effect of the Bill in sweeping away the statutory limit of the fee of registration will have to be

considered in Committee. Meantime, it is important to observe that, in order to make judgments of the Supreme Courts effectual as charges upon land in England, it was necessary to register the same in different books or registers in the Court of Common Pleas, and in each of the Courts Palatine of Lancaster and Durham —seeing that the judgment affected not merely any lands possessed by the debtor at the time of entering up the judgment, but also any lands or interests in land which he might thereafter acquire or become possessed of. Registration was only effectual as against purchasers, mortgagees, or creditors for five years, but there might be re-registration from time to time, which had effect for five years from the date of the last re-registration. The practical effect of registration was, and at present is, that it is notice to intending purchasers, mortgagees, or creditors. So much has registration merely the effect of notice that doubts were at one time raised as to whether registration was necessary in the case where a purchaser, mortgagee, or creditor had notice. To set these doubts at rest, Section 2 of the Judgments Act, 1840, enacted that registration was necessary, "any notice of any such judgment to any such purchaser, mortgagee, or creditor notwithstanding." It is important to observe that the efficacy of judgments in operating as a charge upon land rests upon Sections 13, 18, and 21 of the Judgments Act, 1838, and upon Section 2 of the Judgments Act, 1855, and that a judgment entered up is effectual as against the debtor himself, the issue of his body and all others deriving right from him otherwise than for a valuable consideration, without any registration whatever. Registration was only necessary under the older Acts to protect a judgment creditor against purchasers. By the Land Charges Registration and Searches Act, 1888, from and after 1st January, 1889, the commencement of the Act, there is (Section 5) to be kept at the office of the Land Registry a register of writs and orders affecting lands, and there may be registered therein, in the prescribed manner, any writ or order to enforce any judgment. Registration is to cease to have effect at expiration of five years from date of registration, but may be renewed from time to time, and if renewed to have effect for five years from date of renewal. Registration is to have the same effect as, and to make unnecessary, registration thereof in the central office of the Supreme Court of Judicature in pursuance of any other Act. Section 6 enacts that every such writ and order in Section 5, and every delivery in execution or other proceeding shall be void as against a purchaser for value (defined in the interpretation of terms to include mortgagee or lessee, or other person, for valuable consideration), unless the writ or order is for the time being registered in pursuance of that Act, the Act of 1888. Then follows a proviso that where, at the commencement of the Act, a writ or order is registered in terms of the Judgments Act, 1864, the Act of 1888 shall not affect the operation of such writ or order until the expiry of the period for which it is so registered; and, as registration is effective for five years only, this means at the very latest 1st January, 1894. The result is that, since the latter date, all registrations of judgments, to be effectual as against purchasers for value, must be registered in the Land Registry. The Act of 1888, however, as also the previous Acts, did not interfere with the operation of judgments as a charge upon land without registration in a question with the debtor himself, the issue of his body, or those acquiring right from him without valuable consideration, as enacted under Section 13 of the Judgments Act, 1838, which the Bill does not repeal. Clause 2 of the Bill, however, would seem to take away all operation of a judgment as a charge upon land, even in a question with the debtor himself, unless and until it is registered—

2—(1) A Judgment or Recognisance, whether obtained or entered into on behalf of the Crown or otherwise, and whether obtained or entered into before or after the commencement of this Act shall not operate as a charge on land, or on any interest on land, or on the unpaid purchase money for any land unless or until a writ or order enforcing it is registered under Section 5 of the Land Charges Registration and Searches Act, 1888.

The clause seems absolute in its terms, and not restricted, as in the case of the Act of 1888 or the previous Acts, where registration is only made necessary in a question with purchasers for value, mortgagees, or creditors. As since 1st January, 1894, all registrations of judgments, writs, and orders in order to be effectual as against purchasers for value

Mr. Caldwell.

require to be registered in the Land Register, the registers kept under the Acts of 1838, 1839, 1860, 1864, and 1865 have ceased to be effectual for registration purposes, and the Bill proposes to repeal these statutes, so far as relates to registration in these registers. The effect of this repeal will be to leave these registers with only historical interest, and not with any validity as registers. But registration in these registers may affect the validity of existing titles to land, and, in repealing the statutes it may be necessary to reserve their efficacy so far as anything done or rights may have been acquired under them in respect of registration or non-registration thereunder. These old registers being public registers, and forming an important link in existing titles, it seems a strong step to close them against search without an order of the High Court, which might mean an expensive and disputed application. Besides, a man asked to credit a landowner might wish to ascertain from the public register to what extent that landowner may in previous years have been denuded of any part of his property in virtue of any judgment, so that he might determine how far to give credit. If the intending creditor had to apply for an order of the High Court intimation would doubtless have to be given to the intending debtor, which, of course, would prevent such an application being made. There seemed no reason why what was or had been a public register should be closed against the public who had not an order of the High Court, even although the register only possessed historical interest. He thought the Bill was not clear as regards registration of *lis pendens*. Section 7 of the Judgments Act, 1839, prescribes that purchasers are not to be affected by any *lis pendens*, unless such suit is duly registered in terms of that Act. Section 4 of that Act, relating to registration every five years, is imported into Section 7, but the section so imported is by the schedule to the Bill repealed, without any reservation of the clauses repealed remaining effective as regards any enactments which may continue in force. In the Statute Law Revision Acts there is such a reservation, which, however, seems only to apply to that Act, and not to repeals in statutes generally. Indeed, if there was a general declaratory Act reserving the effect of such repeal as regards enactments which are not repealed but still continue in force, there would seem to be no reason for annually repeating the reservation in the Statute Law Revision Acts. Section 3 of the Judgments Act, 1855, is by the schedule to the Bill repealed, except so far as it relates to *lis pendens*, but the schedule to the Bill repeals everything in that section except the reference to Section 7 of the Judgments Act, 1839, which, as has been pointed out, can only be read by reading in Section 4 of that Act which the schedule of the Bill repeals. He thought it would be better, instead of attempting to keep *lis pendens* alive under the existing Acts, rather to put a couple of clauses into the Bill defining the manner and effect of such registration, and if the Attorney General found any difficulty in framing the clauses, he (Mr. Caldwell) would be glad to give him assistance. In repealing the Sections in the Act of 1855 the schedule said "Sections four to eight." He did not know whether Section eight was meant to be included in the repeal. He rather thought it was. The schedule, however, did not include it, and if it were meant to include it the word "inclusive" would have to be added. The concluding proviso of Section 2 of the Judgments Act, 1855, has been omitted to be repealed. He thought for simplification the Middlesex Registry might now be transferred to the Land Registry. These, however, and some other points were more matter for Committee. He congratulated the Attorney General on the effort which he was making to simplify and perfect the registration of titles to and charges on land. Much still remained to be done in that direction, but it was a great step to concentrate the registration of all writs and orders creating a charge upon land under one system in one register. He had gone thus technically into the subject, because he considered it was the duty of Members of the Opposition carefully to consider and criticise a measure which, although it had nothing of a party interest about it, was nevertheless a measure which had for its object the giving of greater simplification and security to the ever increasing value of land rights in the country.

MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) asked the Attorney-General to give the House

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I think the object of the Bill is extremely desirable. At the present time you have two or three different registers to which you have to refer in order to discover charges on the property, which makes it both difficult and expensive; but I am not certain that there is absolute confidence in the registers established a year or two ago. Solicitors have not absolute confidence in the registers as they are being worked at the present time. The legal profession is exceedingly conservative, and it may take years to establish confidence in this Act. There is no doubt that the registration of the courts does give complete satisfaction. It never creates difficulties, is worked with great care, and there is never a mistake.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I think the hon. Gentleman is confusing two registries. The Land Registry has been in existence many years.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That being so, I shall make no further observation.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I ask that this Bill be read a second time. Its object is the acquisition by compulsory purchase of property adjoining the present Land Registry Office, new buildings being necessary, the present building being entirely inadequate, inconvenient, and a constant source of difficulty and expense. It is proposed to acquire the property adjoining the present offices. I do not think the House wishes me to urge this point too strongly, because we always feel that when we have to acquire property compulsorily for the purposes of the nation, if we insist too much upon the necessities of the case, the price of the property goes up. The other clauses in the Bill are in exactly the same form as in all these Buildings Bills.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Akers Douglas.*)

*MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I thoroughly approve of the object the right hon. Gentleman has in view. I quite approve of what he says as to the inadvisability of laying too much stress upon the necessities of the case. This Bill will go before a Select Committee, and after it has been carefully considered by them there will be another opportunity of discussing it upon the Third Reading if it is thought necessary. It is premature, therefore, to make any remarks on the matter until it comes up in a more definite form.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed to a Select Committee of five Members, three to be nominated by the House, and two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers Douglas.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee), in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, said: The purpose of the Bill is to change the law with respect to the election of parish councils. By the existing law the election of parish councils takes place on the same day as the election of

town councils. That is the effect of the section of the Act of 1894 which I propose to repeal. This Bill proposes that the election of parish councils should take place on a different day. That is the whole object and scope of the Bill. I will only add that it has been drafted and brought before me at the instance of the Association of Burgh Officials of Scotland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): It is my fate really to preserve the legislation of the late Government, of which the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken was a member. This, as the House will remember, was a debated question in the Committee upstairs on the Bill of 1894, and it was really one of the provisions—the provision for having both classes of elections on the same day—which Sir George Trevelyan, who had charge of the Bill, thought was a great feather in his cap. The matter was debated, and a division taken upon it, and the overwhelming sense at that time was that the provision was a good one. Subsequently we at the Scotch Office were bombarded with applications to undo the legislation of my right hon. friend and to make some arrangement whereby the elections should take place on separate days. All sorts of disasters were prophesied if we allowed the matter to stand as it was, and allowed the elections on the same day. The view the Government took was that it would not be fair to try to undo what our predecessors had done without good reason, and that it should be put off to give the arrangement a trial. Accordingly we resisted these demands. The term of three years ran out, and now there has been an actual election. What was the result? The result was that all those disasters that were prophesied did not come to pass. As a matter of fact the arrangements made in the original Bill were found to work very satisfactorily. That being the case, I really cannot feel it consistent with the duty of the Government to give a Second Reading to the Bill, because although the hon. Member is correct in saying that it represents the feeling of certain burghs, I am not prepared to assent to the proposition that it represents the feeling of most of the burgh officials. I do not think it represents the feeling of most of the burghs, and I should never think it right to overturn the legislation of another Government unless there was some very good reason for it. The truth is that the experiment has been found to work very satisfactorily, and therefore I am not prepared to agree to the Second Reading of the Bill.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I was about to ask one or two questions about the Bill, but the speech of the Lord Advocate has to some extent answered them. In England we have got nothing like the uniformity of elections on one day which many people desire. When you have attained that to some extent in Scotland, this Bill would seem to be a somewhat retrograde step, and going back from the ideal previously placed before the Committee upstairs which we sought to attain. On the other hand, there may be a certain amount of inconvenience felt in certain burghs. My hon. friend, in placing the Bill before the House, says there is a desire to have a change, and not to have these elections running at the same time as other elections. I think the House will be guided by the amount of evidence my hon. friend and others are able to bring forward on this subject. If there is a large amount of evidence in favour of the change, I should not be on academic grounds inclined to oppose it, but if there is not that evidence, I think the position taken up by the Lord Advocate is the position one would feel bound to sustain.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present—

The House was adjourned at a quarter after Eleven of the clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 9th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—

Brighton Corporation.
North Warwickshire Water.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

SCOTTISH AMERICAN INVESTMENT COMPANY, LIMITED, BILL [H.L.].

Committed.

OSSETT CORPORATION GAS BILL.

Read 2ª, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

WAKEFIELD CORPORATION MARKET BILL.

Read 2*a*, and committed.

DORKING WATER BILL [H.L.].

EXMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [H.L.].

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3*a*, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

DEARNE VALLEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

NEATH HARBOUR BILL [H.L.].

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS BILL [H.L.].

RHYMNEY RAILWAY BILL [H.L.].

CORK ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

SOUTH ESSEX WATER BOARD BILL [H.L.].

SOUTH ESSEX WATER BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Northbourne be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Barnard; read, and agreed to.

MORLEY CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

PRESTON CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

GREAT GRIMSBY STREET TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

ROTHERHAM CORPORATION BILL [H.L.].

SHEFFIELD CORPORATION BILL [H.L.

RAWMARSH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS) BILL [H.L.].

WALSALL CORPORATION BILL [H.L].

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Barnard be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Northbourne; read, and agreed to.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE TRAMWAYS BILL.

HOYLAKE AND WEST KIRBY IMPROVEMENT BILL.

WIDNES AND RUNCORN BRIDGE BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

GAS AND WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Hoylake and West Kirby Gas and Water, Manningtree and Mistley (Essex) Gas, South Elmsall, South Kirby, and North Elmsall Gas, and Steyning and District Water—was presented by the Earl Waldegrave (for the Lord Balfour); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 52.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (ESTIMATES, 1899-1900).

Statement showing the original and revised programme of estimated expenditure in cash, and in net value of stores to be issued for shipbuilding, etc., during the year 1899-1900.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors for the year 1899.

INDIAN EXPENDITURE (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India (Vol. IV.), and Minutes of Evidence (Vol. III.).

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Return for the year ended 31st December, 1899.

EGYPT, No. 1 (1900).

Reports by Her Majesty's Agents and Consul-General on the finances, administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1899.

AFRICA, No. 3 (1900).

Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba [in continuation of Africa, No. 8. (1899)].

CHINA, No. 2 (1900).

Correspondence with the United States Government respecting foreign trade in China.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2396. Turkey (Trebizond and Sivas, 1899).

INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES).

Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian and Wesleyan services of garrison churches in India which have been consecrated for the service of the Church of England.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899.

Regulations for the appointment of Members of the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the posts of Senior Examiner and of Junior Examiner in the Board of Education (Science and Art Department), professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the pub service are requisite.

Laid before the House (pursuant Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FINANCE BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Co mittee negatived; then Standing Or No. XXXIX. considered (according order), and dispensed with. Bill read and passed.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), a passed.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL [H.L.]

Read 3ª (according to order); Amei ments made; Bill passed, and sent to t Commons.

CENSUS (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), a passed.

NEW BILL.

COUNTY COURTS (INVESTMENT (DEPOSITS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law with regard the investment of money paid into county court—Was presented by t Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to printed. (No. 53.)

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

ROYAL ASSENT.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Ro Assent:—

1. Finance.
2. Army (Annual).
3. Census (Ireland).
4. Military Lands Provisional Ord
5. Colonial Bank.

House adjourned at twe minutes past Three of clock, to Monday the 3 instant, a quarter past F of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 9th April, 1900.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

Army and Navy Investment Trust Bill [Lords].
Cleethorpes Gas Bill [Lords].
Cowes Pier Bill [Lords].
Edinburgh District Lunacy Board Bill [Lords].
Falkirk and District Water Bill [Lords].
Great Berkhampstead Water Bill [Lords].
Gun Barrel Proof Act, 1868, Amendment Bill [Lords].
Imschenetzky's Uralite Patent Bill [Lords].
Kingston-upon-Thames Corporation Bill [Lords].
Motherwell Water Bill [Lords].
New Russia Company Bill [Lords].
Southampton Harbour Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm the issue by the Rhymney Iron Company, Limited, of certain shares credited as partly paid up." Rhymney Iron Company Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the Manchester Ship Canal Company to acquire the Manchester Racecourse and other lands, and to construct a new dock, railway, and works; to establish a thrift fund for their officers and servants; and for other purposes." Manchester Ship Canal Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Mountain Ash to construct additional waterworks and gasworks; and for other purposes." Mountain Ash Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Corporation of Burnley and neighbouring authorities with respect to tramways and street improvements within and beyond the borough; and for other purposes." Burnley Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to extend the boundaries of the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh and County of the City of Edinburgh; to authorise the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of the City to purchase and acquire lands at Saughton; to erect and maintain a Tramway Power Station at Portobello; to construct works and Tramways; to acquire lands; to amend Acts; and for other purposes." Edinburgh Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to make new provisions with respect to the Governing Body of the Schools of King Edward the Sixth in Birmingham, and with respect to the management of the Schools property and revenues under their control; and to confer further powers on the said Governing Body; and for other purposes." Birmingham (King Edward the Sixth) Schools Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to transfer all the property and liabilities of Mason University College, in the City of Birmingham, to the University of Birmingham, and to repeal the Mason University College Act, 1897; to confer certain powers on the said University; and for other purposes." Birmingham University Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Company to raise additional capital, convert their existing capital, acquire lands, amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes." Kingston-upon-Thames Gas Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act for empowering the Dorking Water Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." Dorking Water Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to authorise the Exmouth Urban District Council to purchase the undertaking of the Exmouth and District Waterworks Company, and to supply water within their district; and for other purposes." Exmouth Urban District Water Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the Fishguard Water and Gas Company to extend their limits of supply, to construct additional waterworks and gasworks, to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes." Fishguard Water and Gas Bill [Lords].

RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY BILL [Lords].

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL [Lords].

MOUNTAIN ASH WATER BILL [Lords].

BURNLEY CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

BIRMINGHAM (KING EDWARD THE SIXTH) SCHOOLS BILL [Lords].

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY BILL [Lords].

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES GAS BILL [Lords].

DORKING WATER BILL [Lords].

EXMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL [Lords].

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL.

GLASTONBURY CORPORATION GAS BILL.

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL.

MAIDENHEAD GAS BILL.

UNIVERSAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY BILL [Lords].

WELLINGBOROUGH AND DISTRICT TRAMROADS BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

GOVERNMENTS STOCK AND OTHER SECURITIES INVESTMENT COMPANY BILL [Lords].

LINCOLN CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

NEWPORT (MONMOUTHSHIRE) GAS BILL [Lords].

SOUTHPORT AND LYTHAM TRAMROAD BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 129, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

TOTTENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Finance Bill.

Army (Annual) Bill.

Census (Ireland) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to Public Libraries, Museums, and Gymnasiums, and to regulate the Liability of Managers of Libraries to Proceedings for Libel." Public Libraries Bill [Lords].

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned, Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—

1. Finance Act, 1900.
2. Army (Annual) Act, 1900.
3. Census (Ireland) Act, 1900.
4. Military Lands Provisional Order Confirmation Act, 1900.
5. Colonial Bank Act, 1900.

PETITIONS.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Earlston; Weem; and Haddington; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Petition from Leicester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT ACT, 1899 (BOROUGH OF HACKNEY DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL).

Petition from Hackney, against alteration; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (SCOTLAND) LATER OPENING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Portsmouth; and Peckham Rye; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL AND SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petition from Gainsborough, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Garstang; West Hartlepool; Bolton; Ulster; Ripon; Preston; Southport; and Batley; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (thirteen); Oldbury; Peckham; Swansea; Gloucester; Manchester; Bristol; and Penrith; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Churnside, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (MONMOUTHSHIRE) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Ripon; Saxilby; Garstang; Earby; Manchester; Preston; Gloucester; and Swansea; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN COUNCILS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kinross, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VETERINARY SURGEONS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VIVISECTION.

Petition from Hornsea, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table,

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INDIAN EXPENDITURE (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India (Vol. IV.), and Minutes of Evidence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINES AND QUARRIES.

Copy presented, of Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Mines for the year 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return by Provinces of Agrarian Offences in Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th March; *Mr. William Johnstone*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.]

AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Regulations for the Appointment of Members of the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.]

MERCHANT SEAMEN.

Copy presented, of Report of a Committee appointed by the Board of Trade on the question of Continuous Discharge Certificates for Seamen, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES IN INDIA).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian and Wesleyan Services of Garrison Churches in India which have been consecrated for the service of the Church of England [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd April, 1900, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the posts of Senior Examiner and of Junior Examiner in the Board of Education (Science and Art Department), professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.

Abstract Account presented, of Receipts and Payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended 31st December, 1899, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial Intestacies, etc.) in which Accounts were opened in the Books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.]

CHINA (No. 2, 1900).

Copy presented of Correspondence with the United States Government respecting Foreign Trade in China [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 3, 1900).

Copy presented of Correspondence respecting Slavery and the Slave Trade in East Africa and the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (in continuation of Africa, No. 8, 1889) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 2396 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPT (No. 1, 1900).

Copy presented, of Reports by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General on the Finances, Administration, and Condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (ESTIMATES, 1899-1900).

Copy presented, of Statement showing the original and revised Programme of Estimated Expenditure in cash, and in net value of Stores to be issued for Shipbuilding, etc., during the year 1899-1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL TABLES.

Copy ordered, "of Statement showing the Production and Consumption of Coal and the Number of Persons employed in Coal Production, in the Principal Countries of the World, in each year from 1883 to 1898, as far as the particulars can be stated; together with a Statement showing the Production of, and Trade in, Petroleum in the United States and in the Russian Empire for a series of years (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 118, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.]

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (MONTHLY STATEMENT).

Return ordered, "of monthly comparative statements of the number of Paupers

of all classes (except lunatics in asylums, registered hospitals, and licensed houses, and vagrants) in receipt of relief in England and Wales on the last day of every week in each month of the several years from 1857 to 1900, both inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENT).

Return ordered, "of Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1900, and similar Statement for the 1st day of July, 1900 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 100, of Session 1899)."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 136.]

POOR RELIEF (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Return ordered, "of Statement of the amount expended for In-maintenance and Out-door Relief in England and Wales during the half-year ended Lady Day, 1900.

"And similar Statement for the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1900."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 137.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Returns ordered, "showing, (1) in respect of the local authorities in England and Wales who have carried out or are carrying out improvement or reconstruction schemes under Parts I. and II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, the size of the area included in each scheme; the number of persons of the working classes who were resident on such area at the date of making the scheme, and the number provided for or to be provided for under the scheme; the nature of the accommodation provided; the amount authorised to be borrowed, and the amount actually borrowed for the purpose of the scheme; the rate of interest thereon; the periods allowed for repayment; the amount of loans outstanding on the 31st March, 1900; the estimated or actual expenditure under the scheme in respect of (a) land, (b) buildings; the income from rents or other sources during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1900, and the expenditure (other than that defrayed out of borrowed money) during the year in respect of the scheme, the amount expended in repayment of the loans and interest thereon being distinguished; and (2) the names of the local authorities in England and Wales who have adopted Part III. of the Act and as regards each of those authorities who have provided or are providing lodging houses for the working classes under that part of the Act, the number of lodging houses acquired, erected, or being erected, the number of persons provided for or to be provided for, the amount authorised to be borrowed for the purpose of the purchase of land or the acquisition or erection of lodging houses and the amount actually borrowed, the rate of interest thereon, the periods allowed for repayment, the amount of loans outstanding on the 31st day of March, 1900; the estimated or actual cost of (a) land, (b) buildings; the income from rents or other sources during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1900; and the expenditure (other than that out of borrowed money) during the year, the amount expended in repayment of loans and interest thereon being distinguished."—(*Mr. Hazell.*)

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES (WAGES) (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing, in respect of each County Council, County Borough Council, Rural and Urban District Council, body of Town Commissioners not an Urban District Council, and Poor Law Union in Ireland, whether the Contracts entered into by the Authority for the execution of works specify any conditions as to the Wages to be paid by the Contractor, or other conditions with regard to persons employed by him; and, if so, what are the conditions so specified."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

LAND REGISTRY (NEW BUILDINGS) [ADVANCES].

Committee to consider of authorising the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums as may be required for the

purposes of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of property for building a new Land Registry Office and other Public Offices in London, and of authorising the Treasury to borrow money by means of Terminable Annuities, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Thursday, 26th April.—(*Secretary Sir Matthew White Ridley.*)

CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES (WAGES).

Return ordered, "showing, in respect of each administrative county and each Poor Law Union in England and Wales, whether the Contracts entered into by the Authority for the execution of works specify any conditions as to the Wages to be paid by the Contractor, or other conditions with regard to persons employed by him; and, if so, what are the conditions so specified."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—BOER PRISONERS—PLACE OF CUSTODY.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.); On behalf of the hon. Member for East Mayo, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the severe epidemic which has broken out amongst them, Boer prisoners at present confined in Simons Bay will be removed from the ships and transferred to healthy quarters on shore in Cape Colony.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): This question was fully answered by my hon. friend the Under Secretary for War last week,* and I really have nothing to add to the reply he read to this House.

KOORN SPRUIT DISASTER.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Boers captured at Koorn Spruit with the convoy any British secret papers, maps, or tables containing plans for the invasion of the Free State and the Transvaal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): No report to this effect has been received from Lord Roberts.

CAPE RAILWAY MANAGEMENT.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the manner in which the work of the Railway Department in South Africa has been conducted, any public recognition will be made of the services rendered by Mr. T. R. Price, chief traffic manager of the Cape Government Railways, and the other responsible officials.

MR. WYNDHAM: While highly appreciating the services referred to, it would be premature for the Government to consider such a matter at the present moment.

MILITIA—OFFICERS' GRATUITIES.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether embodied Militia officers are to receive a gratuity of £100; and whether a portion of this can be paid within six months of embodiment.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir; officers of embodied Militia will receive a gratuity of £100, but it is payable only on disembodiment.

MILITIA REGULATIONS.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, as no copies of the Militia Regulations were obtainable at the commencement of the embodiment of the Militia, he will be able to issue new Regulations at an early date.

MR. WYNDHAM: Militia regiments when embodied come under the Regulations for the Regular Forces (Army Act), and do not require the Militia Regulations. A new edition is in course of preparation.

INNS OF COURT RIFLE VOLUNTEERS.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers have been refused permission to go to Win-

* See pages 1253 and 1394 of this Volume.

chester for a week's drill at Easter at their own expense, on the ground that they cannot engage to join a brigade camp fixed for a time when the Law Courts are sitting; and whether, seeing that they have expressed their willingness to join any brigade camp held when the Law Courts are not sitting, he can see his way to grant the permission for which they ask.

MR. WYNDHAM: This permission has not been refused, nor will it be refused.

STRENGTH OF VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if it is the intention of the Secretary of State to authorise the increase of establishment of Volunteer battalions to 1,000 men.

MR. WYNDHAM: Such an increase will be authorised wherever there is a reasonable prospect of the numbers being raised without prejudicing the recruiting of neighbouring corps.

MR. GRETTON: Will that enable an increase in the strength of existing companies instead of adding to the number of companies?

MR. WYNDHAM: I should like to have notice of that question. There are objections to swelling the size of the companies beyond certain limits.

VOLUNTEER BUILDINGS—LOANS.

MR. C. J. MURRAY (Coventry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the authorities in November last raised by one-quarter per cent. the annual rate of interest on loans incurred by Volunteers for purchase of land and for buildings for military purposes; whether they have now again raised this interest by another quarter per cent. in the past month; whether the rate of interest laid down in A. O. 72 in some cases reaches three and three-quarters per cent., exclusive of instalments of capital; and whether, as such increase in the rate charged may tend to discourage Volunteer battalions in their efforts to attain increased efficiency by the provision of proper drill halls and storage for equipment, he will take steps for a reduction in the rate of interest.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews Burghs) (for Mr. HANBURY): The rates for these loans have been raised in the manner described in order to preserve the solvency of the Local Loans Fund. The highest rate of interest now charged amounts to 3¾ per cent., but this only applies to cases in which the repayment is spread over a period of fifty years. To reduce the rates to such a point that the Government would be a loser by these loans would be equivalent to making a grant to Volunteer corps under the disguise of a loan—a course to which there would be serious financial objections.

INDIA—USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES FOR MILITARY SERVICES.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the consecration of churches in India renders illegal the performance therein of services other than those of the Church of England; and, if not, will Government churches be used as heretofore under the control of the military authorities for services for Her Majesty's troops.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Member will find full information on the subject of his question in the papers which I have to-day laid on the Table. The consecration by the Church of England of churches in India does not prevent other denominations from using them, provided they do so with the assent of the ecclesiastical authority to whom these buildings have been transferred. This principle equally applies to all other churches which have been handed over to other denominations for their special use. There has been no departure under the new rules from past practice, except that the authorities of the Church of England are prepared to assent to a more liberal use by other denominations of the churches appertaining to them than was previously the case.

WEST INDIES—FEE FOR REGISTRATION OF INDUSTRIAL BANKS AND ASSOCIATIONS.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has considered the desirability of encouraging

the formation of friendly society banks and industrial and provident supply associations in Barbados and other British West Indian islands; whether the fee of one guinea for registration, imposed in the various Colonial Acts, has been found a deterrent in the poorer districts of these islands; and whether he will make further representations to the several legislatures.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): My attention has been called to the desirability of encouraging the formation of such societies in the West Indies, and in June last I addressed a despatch to the Governors of the several colonies calling their attention to the high fees charged in some of them in connection with the registration of these associations. In some cases the fees have since been reduced; in others it is stated that the existing fees are not deterrent.

SIERRA LEONE—CRIMINAL JURISDICTION AND APPEALS.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether district commissioners in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone have jurisdiction in capital cases, and whether there is any right of appeal from the judgment of a district commissioner in the Protectorate to the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone; whether a defendant charged with a criminal offence and tried before a district commissioner can avail himself of the services of counsel or solicitor; whether officers of the Frontier Police in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone may be appointed district commissioners exercising judicial functions; and whether any, and, if so, what test of legal knowledge is imposed before the appointment of a district commissioner.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: (1) The court of a district commissioner sitting with native chiefs has jurisdiction to hear and determine capital cases. There is no right of appeal from this court to the Supreme Court, but no sentence of death can be carried into effect except upon the warrant of the Governor. A district commissioner sitting alone can only take evidence in a capital case and commit the accused to the Supreme Court for trial. (2) In a district commissioner's court there is no prohibition of the employment of counsel or solicitors; but in the court of a district commissioner sitting with native chiefs counsel or solicitors are not allowed to appear in any case other than one involving the punishment of death, except by leave of the district commissioner. (3 and 4) The answer to the third question is yes, and to the fourth question, no.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION — WESTERN AUSTRALIA—PROPOSED DIVISION OF THE COLONY.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the importance of the document arriving before the discussion on the Federal Enabling Bill is taken, he can do anything to accelerate the transmission of the petition to the Queen, which is now in the hands of Western Australian Ministers, praying for the admission of the Goldfields Districts of Western Australia to the new commonwealth as a distinct and separate State.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no reason to suppose that there will be any undue delay in forwarding the petition, and I have no power to accelerate its transmission.

AUSTRALIAN MAILS—CALLING PORTS.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he can state the actual loss of time that would result from the substitution of Fremantle for Albany as the Western Australian calling port for mail steamers, and whether there is any prospect of the eastern colonies waiving their objections to the proposed change.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The extra steaming time involved in the substitution would be about seven hours, and a further margin of five hours would be required for contingent delays arising from the greater exposure of Fremantle Harbour. The matter is still under discussion.

PACIFIC CABLE COMMITTEE.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies

whether he is in a position to report any progress in connection with the proceedings of the Pacific Cable Committee, and whether the difficulties that arose from certain concessions to a competing scheme by some of the Australian Governments have been satisfactorily adjusted.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I understand that the Pacific Cable Committee has made considerable progress, and is now considering the terms of a Report on the matters referred to it. The Report will deal with the question of the offer made by the cable companies to the Australian Governments.

UGANDA RAILWAY.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what number of miles of the Uganda Railway were completed on 31st March, 1899; what amount of miles remained to be completed at that date; what number of miles have been completed since that date; and what amount of the sums voted for making this railway remains in hand at present; and whether, in estimating this amount, all unpaid liabilities are included.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): On 31st March, 1899, 279 miles of the Uganda Railway had been completed, leaving 303 miles to finish the railway. Since that date 83 miles have been completed and the remaining 220 miles are under construction. All the locomotive and constructional plant, and nearly the whole of the permanent way materials necessary to complete the railway have been obtained, and it is estimated that the £3,000,000 originally voted by Parliament has now been spent. A Bill to make further provision to complete the work will be introduced at once, and a Memorandum explanatory of the excess and of the causes which have led to it will be attached to it.

THEATRICAL CENSORSHIP.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that in some theatres the production of plays of a depraving character is on the increase, which the licensing powers of the Lord Chamberlain seem inadequate to check; whether his attention has been called to a speech recently delivered by the Lord Chancellor, in which he criticised adversely the character of a number of plays now played, expressed doubts as to the advantage of the present system of censorship, and questioned its efficacy; and whether, in view of the improvement in the conduct of the London music halls since they were placed under the control of the County Council, he will consider the desirability of extending the control of the Council to the theatres.

MR. T. B. CURRAN (Sligo, S.): Before the question is answered, may I ask whether the objection on the one hand and the approval on the other is the result of the hon. Member's own investigation?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not a proper question.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have no information or any reason to believe that things are as stated in the first paragraph. The Lord Chamberlain has full power in the matter of licensing stage plays, and is prepared to justify his exercise of those powers. I have not been able to find any such remarks as are attributed to the Lord Chancellor in the second paragraph in the question; and in reply to the third paragraph I can only say that, as at present advised, I adhere to the view which I expressed in answer to a similar question of the hon. Member on April 20th last.

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—DECORATION OF CENTRAL LOBBY.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it is proposed to continue the decoration of the Central Lobby; and, if so, what designs have been submitted for that purpose.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I regret that I have not seen my way to ask for funds for proceeding with the decoration of the Central Lobby this year, and consequently I have not obtained designs for the remaining panels.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxx., page 50.

DR. FARQUHARSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the great expense involved, he will consider the possibility of employing some cheaper material, like canvas; and whether he will give facilities to private enterprise to fill up the space in a cheap and efficient manner?

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: No. In this case I think the old saying applies, that it is a pity to "spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar."

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL—CASE OF MR. BALIAN.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the resignation by Mr. C. Balian of his seat on the London County Council for St. George's in the East, and whether a warrant has been issued for his arrest, and if it is obligatory upon a county council to accept the resignation of a member under such circumstances.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): It is not obligatory upon a county council to accept the resignation on the ground that a warrant has been issued. A warrant to arrest is not equivalent to a conviction.

MR. FLOWER was understood to ask further if it was in the power of the County Council to make inquiry as to the *bona fides* of the tender of resignation.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I must ask for notice of that question.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE—ARGENTINE IMPORTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can give the number of animals suffering from foot and mouth disease that came from Argentina, that were recently seized and slaughtered at Deptford; and whether that meat was allowed to be distributed for sale, or destroyed as unfit for human food.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): One hundred and fifty-four head of cattle were certified to be affected with foot and mouth disease out of the 244 brought to Deptford from Buenos Ayres by the "Ethelhilda." The examination of carcases from the point of view of their fitness for human food does not rest with my Department, but I understand that the meat of animals affected with foot and mouth disease is not as a consequence rendered unfit for human consumption, and that in the case in question none of the carcases were condemned by the sanitary authorities.

SCOTTISH POLICE—ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE—CASE OF LAWRENCE HENDERSON.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, with regard to the case of the absconding bankrupt, Lawrence Henderson, of Leith, whether a reward of £50 was offered for information as to his whereabouts, and whether this reward was offered or advertised by the police or public authorities; whether Mr. James Law, of Edinburgh, having discovered that a passenger who had travelled with him from America under the name of Hume was in fact Lawrence Henderson, called at the head office of the Criminal Department in Edinburgh late on 27th February and gave information that Henderson had gone to Glasgow, and was requested to call back on the following day; whether on doing so Mr. Law was informed that Henderson was expected to give himself up that day, that the charge had been withdrawn, and that the reward was void; and whether any public intimation had been given of the withdrawal of the award; and, if not, whether Mr. Law, having put himself to the trouble of giving the information for which the reward was offered, will be paid it

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): A reward of £50 was offered by the Procurator Fiscal "for such information as shall result in the arrest of Lawrence Henderson." Mr. Law called at the police office, Edinburgh, about 10.30 p.m. on the 28th—not 27th—February, and made the communication referred to. Mr. Law called again on the following day, when he was informed that the execution of the warrant had meantime been suspended owing to Henderson having undertaken to surrender. Mr Law spoke of the reward, but was told that the police could

not express any opinion as to it. No public intimation was given of the withdrawal of the reward, and none was required. The offer was necessarily suspended until it was seen whether Henderson surrendered voluntarily in terms of the undertaking given by him. As the information supplied by Mr. Law did not result, and has not resulted, in Henderson's arrest, he has no claim to the reward.

POST OFFICE RETIREMENT RULES.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the repeated assurances of the Postmaster General, most recently embodied in the reply to a memorial from a deputation appointed by the Fawcett Association to wait on him, dated 16th February, 1900, that no officer will be called on to retire before the age of sixty years who is capable of efficiently performing the ordinary duties of his class, is to be regarded as an assurance that the performances of early morning duties, which are admittedly exceptional, and have been condemned by the official medical officers in the evidence tendered to the Tweedmouth Committee, will not be enforced as a test of an officer's fitness for the postal service.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The assurance was, that no officer would be retired before sixty who is capable of efficiently performing the ordinary duties of his class. In some cases those ordinary duties must involve early morning attendance, and it would be impossible to retain officers who are permanently incapable of performing that particular duty.

POST OFFICE—HEALTH STATISTICS—PHTHISIS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the omission from the Forty-eighth Report of the Post Office of the tables referring to "Deaths from Phthisis" and "Superannuation from Phthisis"; whether he can state the reason for the omission of this information; and whether he will direct that they be inserted in the next Report.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): Tables referring to deaths and superannuation from phthisis among the Post Office staff were omitted from the last Report in order to increase the space available for particulars of more general interest, and because there seemed to be no sufficient reason for bringing phthisis into special prominence. The number of deaths and superannuations during the year from this disease, as well as from others, was given in Appendix F to the Report, and the Postmaster General is disposed to think that the information there given is sufficient.

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE—WHITE STAR LINE.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, what are the terms of the arrangement under which the mails to America viâ Queenstown are conveyed by the Wednesday "White Star" express service from Euston; will he state the length of time during which this arrangement is to continue in force; what is the cost of such service, and is the same provided for in the Postal Estimates, and under what head; and whether such arrangement is in addition to, or in substitution for, contracts under which such mails were previously carried, or have the same been in any way varied in consequence of such arrangement.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The mails for America leaving London on Wednesday for conveyance from Queenstown by packets of the White Star Line are despatched from Euston in the afternoon. They are carried by the 4.15 p.m. passenger train to Chester, and from Chester they are conveyed by special train to Holyhead, and by special steamer to North Wall. No period has been fixed for the continuance of this arrangement. The payment for the service has not yet been settled, and it does not, therefore, appear in the Post Office Estimates. The contract for the mail service between London and Dublin remains unaltered, but the special service from Chester to North Wall has to be provided for by means of a new agreement with the London and North Western Railway Company.

POST OFFICE—RISK ALLOWANCES.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether an answer can now be given to a petition with reference to risk allowances which was sent to the Postmaster General in November, 1899, by the local secretary of the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association on behalf of the local members.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): A reply will be given very shortly.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPHISTS' INCREMENTS.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that a number of London telegraphists acquired certificates during the Science and Art Examinations of May, 1899, which entitled them to a double increment, he will explain why some of the clerks in the London district offices have not received the money, notwithstanding repeated applications, and whether the Postmaster General will investigate the cause of the delay.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The increments have been allowed and take effect from the date of the certificate of qualification in each case. The delay arose from the correspondence which was necessarily involved with the various institutes concerned.

POST OFFICE—WEST CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE MEN'S GRIEVANCES.

MR. STEADMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he will consider the case of a number of auxiliary postmen in the West Central District Office who, after taking on fresh duties this year on a signed agreement that they should be entitled to all the privileges granted by Lord Tweedmouth's Committee to auxiliary postmen working five hours and upwards daily, have now had the agreement revoked on the ground that they are not entitled to the benefits, as they were not working five hours daily previous to 1st April, 1897.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): These auxiliaries were paid at special rates, with the condition that they had no claim to the privileges of annual or sick leave, boot allowances, pension, or gratuity, and that their services might be dispensed with at any moment. Unfortunately the auxiliaries referred to in the question were given a wrong form to sign in the first instance; but the error was corrected as soon as it was discovered and before it could have taken effect.

LIVERPOOL POSTAL STAFF.

MR. STEADMAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Walthamstow Division of Essex, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, how many persons are employed temporarily at Liverpool on the work of sorting clerks and telegraphists: whether some of these persons are supplied by the Liverpool Clerks' Association at £1 per week, also what is their maximum service; and whether the time has arrived when a permanent addition to the staff should be made.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): Nineteen men and six women are employed temporarily at Liverpool as sorting clerks and telegraphists. Six of the men were obtained through the Liverpool Clerks' Association at £1 a week. The service of these persons ranges from three months to two years and ten months. Opportunity is afforded to them to compete at each examination for established appointments, but the majority do not avail themselves of it. As was stated in the House on the 27th ultimo,* a revision of the Liverpool staff is under consideration in connection with the removal to the new post office.

CLONES POST OFFICE.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether premises in Clones, which were under the consideration of the Department as suitable for the erection of the long-talked-of new post office in that town, have passed to another tenant, and are now undergoing alterations for carrying on business: and whether the Clones Urban Council have recently sent him a communication complaining of the inconvenience of the pre-

* See page 443 of this volume.

sent postal accommodation; and what steps do the Department now intend to take in this matter.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr. HANBURY): The premises referred to have been let to a tenant who is about to adapt them for his private business. A communication on the subject of the postal accommodation was received from the urban council in September last, and the matter has been pressed forward as much as possible. The Department will now proceed to consider other sites which are still on offer.

IRISH MONITORS AND CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the attention of the Treasury authorities has been directed to the unequal position of persons who have served as monitors in Irish national schools in competing for Civil Service appointments as compared with members of the Royal Irish Constabulary under like conditions; and whether he will intimate to the Civil Service Commissioners the advisability of extending to monitors the same facilities as regards age allowances as are at present extended to members of the Royal Irish Constabulary when competing for Civil Service appointments.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (for Mr HANBURY): Irish monitors do not enjoy the special privileges in competing for Civil Service appointments which have been conferred on members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. My right hon. friend is not prepared to admit that the cases are similar; and it is evidently undesirable that persons who have been trained at public expense for the position of teacher should be given special encouragement to quit that profession for the Civil Service.

MINISTRY OF TRADE FOR IRELAND.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has seen the resolution of the Dublin Trades Council regretting that the Act establishing the Board of Agriculture and Industries in Ireland contains no provision for giving the same encouragement and representation to the interests of trade as it gives to agriculture, and urging the Government to amend the Act so as to provide for the appointment of a Minister of Trade for Ireland; and whether the Government will favourably consider the suggestion of the Dublin Trades Council.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): My attention has been called to the resolution referred to. The matter was fully discussed in Committee on the Bill,* and it seems rather premature to suggest an amendment of an Act that is only eight days in operation.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Except on the principle that a stitch in time saves nine.

KILKENNY UNION—LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can explain the cause of the delay on the part of the Kilkenny Union Board in providing a cottage for a labourer named James Lanigan, whose application was lodged in November, 1898, and was sanctioned by the Board and a site selected in July, 1899; and whether he will see that the building of this cottage is proceeded with at once.

MR. ATKINSON: A Provisional Order sanctioning the erection of a number of cottages in the Kilkenny rural district is in course of preparation. Amongst the applicants for these cottages is an individual named James Lanigan, but it will rest with the rural district council to decide whether or not they will let one of the cottages to this man when built. The reply to the second paragraph is in the negative.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: But, having decided on building the cottage, and selected the site, have the board any option but to proceed with it?

* For discussion on the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill (1899) on consideration as amended by the Standing Committee, see *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxv., page 96; refer also to the consideration of Lords Amendments, Vol. lxxvi., page 40.

MR. ATKINSON: If they have got the Order they must proceed.

MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL SECRETARYSHIP.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, as representing the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can explain the delay of the Meath County Council in appointing a secretary; and whether he will see that a secretary is appointed at once.

MR. ATKINSON: The Local Government Board have observed with regret the delay that has been allowed by the Meath County Council to take place in appointing a secretary, and the Board have remonstrated with the council on the subject.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: And what was the explanation given?

MR. ATKINSON: I cannot say.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS' SALARIES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether he will see that the orders for payment of National teachers' salaries are sent out in time to be paid to the teachers before Easter Sunday, Easter Monday, the ordinary date for payment, being a holiday.

MR. ATKINSON: This is altogether a matter for the consideration of the Commissioners of National Education, who inform me that it will not be practicable to remit teachers' salaries until the 17th instant.

THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND THE LATE SIR D. STEWART.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government have thanked the French Government for the respect paid by the military authorities of Algiers to the memory of Field Marshal Sir Donald Stewart in according to him all the honours paid to a marshal of France; whether the French Government offered to send the body to this country in a French man-of-war; and, if so, why this offer of international courtesy was declined; whether one of Her Majesty's ships has been commissioned to bring home the body from Gibraltar, and what steps are being taken to accord to that distinguished officer like funeral honours in his own country as have been so generously rendered to him by the French nation.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir. The cordial thanks of Her Majesty's Government have already been conveyed to the French Government for the honour so generously paid to the remains of the late Field Marshal Sir D. Stewart. I am not aware that any offer was made for the conveyance of the remains to this country in a ship of the French Navy. The remains were in fact removed from Algiers to Gibraltar in the "Juno," a first-class cruiser, and are now being conveyed to this country in the "Rameses." I am informed that on the receipt of the news of the Field Marshal's death steps were taken to accord a military funeral befitting his rank, after ascertaining the wishes of his family as to the place of interment. The funeral service takes place in the chapel of Chelsea Hospital, of which he was governor, and will follow generally on the lines which have been observed at the ceremony of the funerals of his predecessors.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): On what day will the funeral of Sir Donald Stewart take place? The newspapers announce Thursday. I am told that the day will be Saturday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry I have not the information my right hon. friend desires. I can no doubt find out and convey the news to him, but it has not been furnished to me.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I wish to ask the Secretary of the Local Government Board a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether it is proposed to substitute the words "town clerk of the borough" for the words "clerk of the county council" wherever the latter words appears in all the draft Orders in Council constituting metropolitan boroughs.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The hon. Member could not have been present when the

discussion took place the other night on this point.* It is not possible to entertain the idea of substitution in the scheme. It is proposed, however, if possible, to add the name of town clerk to that of clerk of county councils, and the addition will apply to all the Draft Orders.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): Will the Leader of the House now tell us, as I think he promised, what business he proposes to take on the Monday following the Easter recess?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; I did give that promise. The first Order will be the financial resolution required to introduce a Bill for completing the Uganda railway. The money already voted by the House has been insufficient for the purpose, and more will have to be asked for, and the proposal will be introduced in the form of a financial resolution. The second Order will be the Burials Bill, then the Sea Fisheries Bill, the Money-lending Bill, and the Lunacy Bill. It will be seen that I have endeavoured to put down uncontroversial Bills, and any discussion on the Uganda railway I would suggest may conveniently be taken on the Second Reading or some subsequent stage of the Bill.

MR. STEADMAN: Will the Post Office Vote be taken on the 27th of the present month?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I hope so.

MR. FLOWER: When will the Education debate be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say, but a minute embodying the new proposals has either been laid or will be laid on the Table to-day.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Can the right hon. Gentleman say anything about the business during the remainder of the week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot. Of course, the Government have no right over the Tuesday and Wednesday, and it is rather early to speak as to the Thursday. If hon. Members for Ireland have any special views as to the business I shall be very glad to have them communicated to me.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I think it would be very inconvenient to Irish Members to have any contentious Irish business taken during that week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then I will not take any.

MR. CHANNING: Has any decision been come to as to the date for taking the Housing of the Working Classes Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Agricultural Holdings Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order, Sittings of the House.—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

NEW BILL.

POOR REMOVAL.

Bill to amend the Law relating to the removal of Paupers from England to Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Chaplin, and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.

POOR REMOVAL BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the removal of Paupers from England to Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 176.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The President of the Board of Agriculture.*)

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the fact that at last he has been able to introduce the Bill so long promised. It has, I believe, been mentioned

* See page 1377 of this Volume.

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reverse that. Surely it is not unreasonable to ask that if a landlord unreasonably disturbs a tenant, the tenant shall have compensation. Just bear in mind, the advantage is all on the side of the landlord in the case of a change. If the farm buildings are in good repair it costs him little or nothing, but the tenant has to leave old associations and to go into a new neighbourhood, and all this costs money. If a tenant has adapted his farm to the wants of a district and worked up a business connection he should be compensated for unreasonable disturbance. My view is that an endeavour should be made to encourage the system of nineteen year leases which formerly prevailed in Scotland and the north of England, and under which there was such an enormous amount of accumulated fertility in the land as to enable the farmer to go through the first stress of agricultural depression without such a severe loss as was sustained in the Eastern Counties, where the system did not prevail. I hope that some clause will be considered which will encourage the tenant farmer to lay out his money, and to ensure that he shall not be unreasonably disturbed after having done so. Then with regard to freedom of cultivation, it seems to me absurd that a tenant should not be able to farm to the best advantage without being hampered by the restrictions which are now found in leases—provided that he does not reduce the fertility of the land. It may be asked why tenant farmers sign such agreements. I cannot explain, but it does seem to me absolutely ridiculous that he should not be able to cultivate his land to the best advantage, providing he does not reduce its fertility, and no man would more strongly support a clause to prevent deterioration of the soil than I would. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has, I believe, claimed a considerable amount of credit for having provided for one arbitrator in the settlement of disputes. I agree with him that that is a principle which should be carried out. I would go even further than he does. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal is that there shall be one arbitrator unless the parties otherwise agree. Now, I hold with the Central Chamber of Agriculture that if an arbitrator is appointed by the Board of Agriculture, he should be quite competent to decide any dispute between landlord and tenant.

in no fewer than five Queen's Speeches, but this is the first time it has been brought in. The right hon. Gentleman on the very first day of the first session of this Parliament gave notice that he intended to introduce it, but instead of doing so he seems to have been engaged ever since in whittling it down until it has become a very small measure indeed. I do not wonder he has been very reticent in addressing the House on the merits of the measure. From the time taken to prepare it we were justified in expecting a more complete Bill. But while I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on introducing it, I cannot congratulate him with the same heartiness on the provisions which it contains. It seems to me that the measure gives very little power to the tenant farmer in claiming compensation for improvements at the determination of a tenancy. I wish very much that it had been otherwise, and that full and fair compensation had been provided for all tenants who at the determination of their tenancy have to quit their holdings. It certainly provides that a tenant may claim compensation for improvements under the custom of the country instead of under the existing Act, and it also allows him to claim for home-grown corn, but those two points seem to be absolutely inadequate to satisfy the legitimate demands of the agriculturists in this matter. I notice my hon. friends from Scotland are aggrieved because a separate Bill is not brought in for that country. I can only express my belief that if the clauses of this measure were applied to any part of the United Kingdom or any of its colonies it would not effect very much of a revolution. I had hoped to see a measure of simplification, but although the Bill does simplify matters to a certain extent, I cannot but think that in some ways it adds complication to the already complicated provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act. I will just take one point. This Act is to be read in with other Acts, and the ordinary tenant farmer when he takes up this Bill will have to read it in conjunction with the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883, the Tenants' Compensation Act of 1890, and the Market Gardeners' Compensation Act, 1895. I think it is a pity the right hon. Gentleman has not taken some pains to simplify the law in this respect. The tenant farmer ought to have a single Act within the four corners of which he can tell exactly what is contained. Under the present circumstances he will need to be an accomplished lawyer to know what compensation he can get under the complicated laws that have gathered about this subject. It has been said it would be bad tactics on the part of the Government to introduce a consolidating measure. Is it not pitiable that a Government should study tactics in attempting to do justice to the agricultural interest? If there is one thing more important than another to the agriculture of this country it is the question of fruit growing. Suppose a farmer plants fruit trees, how can he get compensation under this Bill? If he plants them over an acre he must get the consent of the landlord before he can claim compensation. If he plants under an acre he will have to give notice of his intention to the landlord to plant the trees, but if his holding is treated as a market garden he can dispense with both formalities, and may plant the whole of it without the consent of the landlord, and without giving notice. For my own part, I regard an Agricultural Holdings Bill as a Bill which ought to encourage the application of skill and capital to the land. I have been unable to discover any such encouragement in this Bill. We know very well that the old system of agriculture must come to an end and farmers must pay attention to the supply of such things as dairy produce, cattle raising, and poultry breeding, things which used to be neglected in the days of high prices for wheat. Will this Bill give any encouragement to a farmer to lay out money on the land? If he wants to adapt his buildings to dairy purposes, or put up a poultry shed, in all these matters he has to go through the formality of getting the consent of the landlord. That, as everybody knows, is extremely difficult to obtain. Under this Bill the farmer will not be able even to improve a road or a water course—that is, with a secure prospect of compensation—unless he obtains the consent of the landlord. He is hampered and restricted in every way by the provisions of this measure. Then there is also the question of permanent pasture. I have never been able to understand why the tenant farmer should require the consent of his landlord in order to be entitled to compensation for it at the end of his tenure. I see absolutely no reason what-

ever for it. If a tenant farmer lays down permanent pasture, and that increases the value of the holding to an incoming tenant, he ought not to be required to have obtained the assent of his landlord in order to claim compensation. Remember, laying down permanent pasture does not impoverish the land; it tends, on the contrary, to gather up fertility in the land. The Central Chamber of Agriculture goes one better than the right hon. Gentleman in this Bill, for it recommends that only notice to the landlord should be required to enable the tenant to claim compensation for permanent pasture. Then there is the question of seeds and two years pastures. We know that of late years a different system has been adopted. I have an instance in my own mind where a farmer has gone on laying down land to seed, and got very good pasture indeed. When he leaves he ploughs it up, and the House will see what a disadvantage the incoming tenant is placed under. It seems to me it is a rather short-sighted policy which is embodied in this Bill. A tenant is only to get so much compensation as fairly represents the value of the improvement to the incoming tenant, and if he lays out his money injudiciously he will not be recouped for it. Surely, if he lays it out judiciously, he ought to get a good return for it. Under this Bill, too, the tenant would lose the money he had expended on an improvement which might be of no value at the moment of his quitting his holding, and he would be deprived of the compensation which is rightly his due. Then there is the possibility of raising the rent on a tenant's own improvements. I know hon. Gentlemen say that no good landlord would take advantage of a tenant in that way, but there are landlords and landlords. It is not for the good landlords that we want legislation, it is for the landlords who bear hardly on the poorer tenants in remote parishes. The present law, as has been pointed out, puts an absolute premium on bad farming. If a man farms badly he will not get his rent raised on his improvements, and he will not be so likely to get notice to quit, because a farm in an impoverished condition is not likely to let readily. The good farmer is penalised and the bad farmer encouraged, and I think the House of Commons should do all it can to reverse that. Surely it is not unreasonable to ask that if a landlord unreasonably disturbs a tenant, the tenant shall have compensation. Just bear in mind, the advantage is all on the side of the landlord in the case of a change. If the farm buildings are in good repair it costs him little or nothing, but the tenant has to leave old associations and to go into a new neighbourhood, and all this costs money. If a tenant has adapted his farm to the wants of a district and worked up a business connection he should be compensated for unreasonable disturbance. My view is that an endeavour should be made to encourage the system of nineteen year leases which formerly prevailed in Scotland and the north of England, and under which there was such an enormous amount of accumulated fertility in the land as to enable the farmer to go through the first stress of agricultural depression without such a severe loss as was sustained in the Eastern Counties, where the system did not prevail. I hope that some clause will be considered which will encourage the tenant farmer to lay out his money, and to ensure that he shall not be unreasonably disturbed after having done so. Then with regard to freedom of cultivation, it seems to me absurd that a tenant should not be able to farm to the best advantage without being hampered by the restrictions which are now found in leases—provided that he does not reduce the fertility of the land. It may be asked why tenant farmers sign such agreements. I cannot explain, but it does seem to me absolutely ridiculous that he should not be able to cultivate his land to the best advantage, providing he does not reduce its fertility, and no man would more strongly support a clause to prevent deterioration of the soil than I would. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has, I believe, claimed a considerable amount of credit for having provided for one arbitrator in the settlement of disputes. I agree with him that that is a principle which should be carried out. I would go even further than he does. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal is that there shall be one arbitrator unless the parties otherwise agree. Now, I hold with the Central Chamber of Agriculture that if an arbitrator is appointed by the Board of Agriculture, he should be quite competent to decide any dispute between landlord and tenant.

There ought, therefore, to be no necessity for two arbitrators and a referee, which means additional cost and an advantage on the side of the longest purse, which is not the side of the tenant in the majority of cases. This provision does not seem to me to differ very much from the Act of 1883. I hope that before the Bill is passed the right hon. Gentleman will insist that all differences shall be settled by a single arbitrator, and if that arbitrator is appointed by the Board of Trade I am sure he will have the confidence of both landlord and tenant. Then there is the question of putting in claims. I hope that the landlord and tenant will be placed on a footing of perfect equality with regard to this matter. When a tenant claims for improvements all the improvements are to be scheduled, but when a landlord claims for dilapidations no schedule is required. I cannot see why this difference should be made. Hon. Gentlemen opposite smile at the idea, but I fail to see where the merriment comes in. The Report of the Royal Commission, which was signed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture, recommended that the landlord's claim for dilapidations should be scheduled.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): Does the hon. Member say I signed a recommendation for a schedule limiting the rights of the landlord at common law?

MR. LAMBERT: No, Sir; but the right hon. Gentleman did sign a Report which suggested that the dilapidations for which a landlord might claim should be scheduled. In conclusion, I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will accept some of the Amendments which will be moved, and that the Bill will encourage rather than penalise agricultural enterprise.

*MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.): I think this measure will be a very useful one, and will be hailed as a measure for the good of the farmers, because it will help to simplify and cheapen the procedure by means of which they can obtain payment of their claims for compensation. Under the Act of 1883 compensation was no doubt given, but it was very costly and very difficult to get, and frequently after the tenant had claimed and the landlord had counter-claimed all the money went on costs, and neither party got anything. This Bill proposes to abolish all that. It proposes to give a cheap and easy means by which claims can be settled. An arbitrator is appointed, the tenant puts in his claim, and within a certain time the landlord puts in his claim, and then fair compensation is awarded. Under the former Act a tenant put in his claim, and very often the landlord simply put in a counter-claim, and that system gave rise to great discontent among the farmers. Under the present Bill both parties will have to have their claims in by a certain date, the matter will then be referred to the arbitrator, and compensation will be given by a cheap and easy method. The hon. Gentleman said that he did not think much of the Bill because it did not revolutionise the land laws of the country.

MR. LAMBERT: I did not say that. I said that if its provisions were applied to, say, Australia, it would not effect any revolution.

*MR. JEFFREYS: Our landlords and tenants get on so well that they do not want any revolution. It is quite exceptional to find a landlord and a tenant going to court with reference to these matters. As a general rule they get on very well together, and I have been much impressed at the way in which farmers have attended the meetings of the Central Chamber of Agriculture and have discussed these matters in a fair and impartial spirit. I do not believe that there is any real hostility existing between landlords and tenants in this country, but naturally when a tenant has put money into a farm and has improved it, he requires compensation when he goes out. And I hope this Bill will be the means of giving that cheap and easy means of securing compensation which we all desire. With regard to the contention of the hon. Gentleman that tenants ought to have power to put up buildings, I think that would be very unwise, and that the consent of the landlords should in all cases be obtained. There are three schedules with reference to improvements. Under the first, the tenant has to give notice and obtain the consent of the landlord; under the second, he has to

give notice, but can proceed without the consent of the landlord; and under the third, he need neither give notice nor obtain consent. With regard to buildings, I should have thought that farmers would have no objection to seeking the consent of the landlords, because, if the buildings are necessary, consent is always given. I know many estates where the rental now merely represents a percentage on the capital employed in putting up buildings. A good deal of the land pays no rent at all, the rent charged being merely interest on the cost of the buildings, and I was astonished to hear the hon. Gentleman advocate that farmers should be empowered to put up buildings on their own account. The first thing a tenant does who wants an additional building is to go to the landlord, and in many instances the landlords, pinched and impoverished though they are, are willing to spare some money for the purpose of buildings. The hon. Gentleman alluded to fruit gardens, but this Bill deals more with large agricultural farms than with small fruit gardens, though I do not mean to say that the fruit industry is not an important industry in certain districts. As regards the Bill, it is very satisfactory as regards the simple and cheap method it provides with reference to the settlement of claims for compensation. That is a long step in the right direction. If hon. Gentlemen will look at the second schedule, I think they will admit it is excellently drawn up, and I am sure many farmers will desire to get rid of their present agreements in order to come under the Bill when it is enacted. The hon. Gentleman said we ought to have one Act which would enable every farmer to understand clearly what he was doing, and that the Act of 1883 ought to be joined with this Bill. I understand that there would be great difficulty in doing that at present, but no doubt in the course of time the two may be joined together so that they may be more readily intelligible to farmers. Then with regard to arbitration, the power now exercised by the county courts is to be transferred to the Board of Agriculture, and that also is a step in the right direction. I am sure we in the country do not go to law half as much as people in the towns, and I am very glad that the power of the county courts is to be transferred to the Board of Agriculture, and that the Board will appoint the arbitrator. Then there is another matter which I think farmers will be very glad of, and that is with regard to the consumption of corn on the holdings. In former days every sack of corn was worth a great deal of money. Now, however, wheat is worth comparatively little; a great deal of it is hawked about at 28s. a quarter, and in fact it is not worth growing. I think that the difference in prosperity between the farmers of Scotland and England is that in Scotland they grow hardly any wheat. England grows 96 per cent. of the wheat produced in Great Britain, most of it being grown in the Midlands and south of England, and the consequence is that the farmers in these districts are much worse off than the farmers in the north of England and in Scotland, where hardly any wheat is grown. Wheat is now at such a low price in England that a great many farmers feed their stock on it, but they received no compensation for that under the old Act. This Bill, however, provides that where corn produced on the farm is given to the stock, the farmer is entitled to compensation, just in the same way as if he bought the food and gave it to the animals on the farm. I confess it will be very difficult to assess how much corn produced on the farm has been used on the farm, but I hope with the easy method of procedure provided in the second schedule this difficulty will be got over. With regard to pasture land, I know many farmers think they ought to have the right to lay down pasture without notice to the landlord, and then claim compensation; but I never could understand why farmers should desire to lay down pasture without the consent of the landlords. That is quite unintelligible to me, because in nine cases out of ten the landlord provides the seeds free of cost. He or his agent goes over the land, and considers whether it is suitable for pasture, and if it is the landlord provides the seeds and very often the fences; and in my county he also provides for the watering of the land. I have known farmers come from Devonshire to Hampshire and rent land, and endeavour to turn it into pasture. But it is very difficult to make good pasture on our chalk hills as compared with land in Devonshire, and these farmers at the end of two or three years found it was absolutely hopeless to

attempt it. This matter of pasture is of great importance to farmers, and it ought not to be laid down without the consent of the landlord, because the landlord or his agent very probably knows most about the capabilities of the soil, and the difficulty of providing water, and, of course, without water good pasture is impossible. Taking all these considerations into account, I think that before farmers lay down pasture they ought to get the consent of the landlords. There is another matter I do not agree with, and that is that there is no compensation for seeds older than two years. The practice is different in different districts, but under the four-course rotation system clover or rye grass is sown with oats, and the following year comes into crop, and after that the land is ploughed in preparation for wheat. In my part of the country we grow a great deal of sainfoin, which stays down for several years and is often in its best condition in its fourth or fifth year, but if no compensation is to be given after two years farmers cannot get any compensation for that crop. Therefore in Committee I propose to ask my right hon. friend whether he cannot provide compensation for seeds which are in good condition and where the ground is clean and in good heart, and I hope my right hon. friend will be able to accept that suggestion. Then again with reference to the increased fertility of the holding due to continuous good farming, how are you going to assess what is due as compensation, unless you have a careful record of every field made when the farmer comes in and when he goes out? Surveyors would have to go over the land periodically and record what was the state of cultivation, and a vast cost, which neither the tenant nor the landlord would agree to, would have to be incurred. If the State sent down surveyors and did the work for nothing, no doubt the farmers would be very glad. I cannot conceive how you could carry it out: and, therefore, I am not surprised that compensation for increased fertility of the holding, due to continuous good farming, has been omitted from the Bill. But I think another matter might have been put into the Bill, and that is in regard to notice of claim. Under Section 7 of the Act of 1883, two months before the expiration of the lease, notice had to be given by the tenant to the landlord of a claim for compensation. Well, to my surprise, I see that by Section 2 of the present Bill notice must be given three months after the expiration of the tenancy. Surely that is too late. When the incoming tenant has to pay the compensation, it ought to be done before the farmer who is going out leaves the farm. I intend to ask my right hon. friend to amend the clause so that the notice of claim must be given twenty-eight days before the expiration of the lease; so that the whole thing may be decided before he quits the farm. In the same way, the landlord ought to give the outgoing tenant twenty-eight days notice before the expiration of the lease: but I would give him a little time after the tenant goes out for notice of claim in respect of the dilapidation of buildings. In regard to the land itself, both landlord and tenant ought to make their claim before the tenant goes out. There is another matter which I also think might perhaps be put into the Bill, although I do not urge it so strongly as the other point just mentioned; and that is in regard to claims in respect of damages. There is no time limit to the landlord's claim. In the Act of 1883 the limit for landlord's claims was four years. I think there ought to be some limit, and I would suggest two years. If that were done it would be a very fair thing; I do not believe the landlord would be injured, and I am sure it would be a great satisfaction to the tenant. I do not wish to be hostile to the Bill in any way. I think it will simplify and cheapen procedure, and on the whole I think it will be satisfactory to both landlord and tenant. It will prevent bogus claims, and all those claims and counter claims, not so much by the landlord as his agent, which were common formerly. Both landlord and tenant ought to put in their claim within a certain time simultaneously. The Bill will provide an easy and cheap mode of arbitration, but it will not take the place of voluntary agreements. Some hon. Gentlemen are of the belief that it will sweep away all voluntary agreements. I am glad it does not. There are many men in this country, both landlords and tenants, who get on remarkably well together. They meet together, and make their own agreements: they do not want any Act of Parliament, and they and their families live in harmony together for generations. But failing an agreement, then this Act will step in and

give an easy and simple form of lease. It is for that purpose that this amending Bill has been introduced into Parliament, and I hope it will become law. I ought to have said at the beginning that a committee of the Central Chamber of Agriculture went into this question in 1889, and sat again in 1894. At that time there was a very strong committee of well-known farmers from the north of England, where they are supposed to farm better than farmers do in the south. My right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford, the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, and I myself were also on that committee. We sat for a great many days, and threshed out all these matters, and I am glad to say that a great many of our recommendations have been carried out in this Bill. It is a very simple Bill, and will cheapen and simplify the whole process of arriving at the compensation which is due to farmers when they go out of their holdings. I congratulate my right hon. friend on having introduced a Bill which I believe will be satisfactory to both landlords and tenants, and which may attract more farmers to the land instead of driving them away from it, as some Acts of Parliament have done.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I have been so long associated with the hon. Member for North Hampshire in the committees of the Chambers of Agriculture that I am specially glad to follow him in this debate. I congratulate him on making a speech which is fair and most useful. Although I do not agree with all that he has said, yet I cordially assent to many of his points, which I sincerely trust may be of real effect and usefulness when we come to deal with the Bill in Committee. Most heartily I agree with one expression made use of by my hon. friend, that this Bill is only a small amending Bill. I am glad that anything is being done in the direction of improvement; but it seems to me that this Bill is one of the worst in form, and one of the flimsiest and most unsatisfactory in its provisions, ever introduced into the House of Commons in my recollection. It has certainly been criticised very sharply by most agricultural bodies. The Newcastle Farmers' Club, which has taken a very active part in promoting land reform, held a meeting recently which was addressed by one of the best known farmers in the north of England, who farms 10,000 acres, and who has been a leader in land reform for a long period. That gentleman said the Bill was "not worth the paper it was written upon"; that it "would be received by thinking and enterprising tenants (and by the public, if they understood it) with righteous indignation; it is better," he added, "that there should be plain speaking rather than a miscarriage of justice." I am not quite sure that that is going further than I myself would go in speaking of this Bill; but I refer to it as showing how the Bill ha been received by some of the most active and thoughtful of tenant-farmer reformers. It seems to me that it deals with the mere fringe of the questions raised by, and the decisions in, the courts of law in interpreting the old Act, and does not deal at all with the wider issues raised by the complaints of the tenant farmers of the country for generations past. If the few benefits proposed to be given by the Bill were given in a simple and intelligible form, I would say to the farmers, "By all means accept the Bill"; but I hold that there are drawbacks and qualifications, even in this small boon, which are perilous and objectionable. After all, this is an amending Bill to set right the Act of 1883. Does the Bill really touch the central and essential defects of the Act? Does it protect the improving tenant? Does it give a real stimulus to the general improvement of agriculture? Having paid close attention to the whole matter, having had special opportunities on the Royal Commission of hearing the whole of the evidence in regard to the terrible period of agricultural depression, I feel bound to say that it is a great scandal, if not a cruel wrong, to the tenant farmers of England that this measure has been delayed so long. The gravest defect of the Act of 1883 was that it gave no real protection whatsoever to the tenant farmer who wanted to improve his holding, and wanted to remain to enjoy the fruits of his improvements. That defect and other defects became speedily known, and experience has more than demonstrated the sound judgment of Sir James Caird on the inadequacy of the Act of 1883 in predicting that the Act would fail just because it did not protect the tenants who most deserved protection. I maintain that if the most serious defects of the Act of 1883 had been rectified as early as 1887, or even as 1890, it would

have saved an enormous amount of injustice to the tenant farmers of the country, it would have saved multitudes of them from bankruptcy, and would have left a much larger area of land in a sound state of cultivation than it is. If the improving tenant requires protection against the confiscation of his improvements by the raising of rents in good times, he needs protection ten times more against confiscation of his improvements by the refusal of adequate reduction of rents in bad times. There are large landowners who have set up the highest standard of honour, and have stated clearly the principles which govern this question. Lord Londonderry, who was chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture last year, said "the root of the present evil was to be found in the offering of competition rents which the land was unable to bear." The Duke of Richmond, also, one of the best and most generous of landlords, said before the Commission that it was "absolutely fatal to set men bidding against each other." Competition, unchecked by equitable machinery to divide what is the tenant's from what is the landlord's, is not a fair measure of rents, but an instrument to enable the landlord to put up to auction his tenant's property as well as his own. It has worked with ten-fold injustice and economic injury to the improving tenant during the period of depression. Where there are a few highly cultivated and thoroughly worked up farms in the market, it is obvious that those farms become prizes to a large number of men, who compete, and the relative rent of those farms is raised far higher than the rents of the neighbouring farms, which are inferior, or which have been neglected. Many interesting farm accounts were brought before the Commission, some dealing with prosperous and others with unprosperous farms. Mr. Wilson Fox, in reporting on Lincolnshire, produced farm accounts of a most startling nature. They showed that instead of the rent from the various farms being in the proportion of two to one of the tenant's profits—which was the assumed proportion for the purpose of income tax—the rents varied from seven up to thirty-five and fifty times the profit obtained by the tenants of the holdings. The results of such a system as that are to place the economic loss altogether disproportionately on the shoulders of the improving tenants on estates not managed in the broad and generous manner of those to which I have referred. It is becoming perfectly plain to the farmers that their only way of recouping themselves, and protecting the capital which they have invested in the soil, is by taking out of the soil afterwards what they first put in. That is the fatal result of this policy. In the operation of the law as it exists you are placing a heavy penalty on the best farmers, and are offering the strongest inducement to an unscrupulous tenant to rob the soil and let his land go to rack and ruin in order to obtain a renewal of his tenancy on easier terms. After all, this is first and foremost a landlord's question. We have just been pleasantly reminded by Sir Ernest Clarke's article on Mr. Philip Pusey, that it was a great landlord who first raised the question of tenant right, and raised it not only from generosity to tenant farmers, but because it was the highest interest of landlords. The working of the present land system for the last fifteen or twenty years has resulted in the deterioration of the land and the impoverishment of the landlords. They have been ill-advised enough to refuse proper reductions to improving tenants, who have thrown up the land in despair and had to go elsewhere, and the land has then, in many cases, been let to an inferior tenant at a rent which he knew he could not recoup by fair farming, and who worked out of the soil the good the previous tenant had put into it. That has largely been the case in Essex and the other Eastern Counties, where in many districts there have been as many as three sets of tenants in ten years, each of whom has left the land in a more ruinous condition than his predecessor. It is in the interest not only of the tenant, but in the interest of the landowners of England that the land should be cultivated continuously up to the highest point. Now I deprecate anything like a conflict of the classes in this matter, and it is the most short-sighted policy to look upon this matter as one of conflicting rights. It is a landlord's question as much as a tenant's. I have urged that it was a grave wrong to the tenant farmers of England that nothing should have been done to remove the main defect of the Act of 1883, and to protect them from the worst effects of the terrible depression, and that these evils should

have been let run rampant and work general ruin. Well, does the present Bill do anything to remove those wrongs? I say it does not. There are a few amendments which are simple and useful, including the clearing up of three small legal points, in which little more is done than affirming what has become the practice of the Courts. Coming to the central point of this Bill, the arbitration procedure of this Bill is excellent. I do not know whether any Amendments are likely to be introduced in the second schedule, but it is not necessary to discuss that now. But all those who have followed this subject will agree, as I do, with the hon. Member for North Hampshire, that the procedure seems so excellent, that many farmers who read this schedule would be glad to give up their agreements and come in under it and enjoy its advantages. There are points where I take issue with the hon. Member. The Bill provides most satisfactory machinery for arbitration between landlord and tenant, but the Bill also gives the most absolute power for contracting out, not only as to the scales of compensation for specific improvements, but even as regards the procedure of arbitration itself. The eighth section of the old Act is now struck out, which provided that the reference under the Act must take place, if either party insisted. There is a passage in the second clause which will enable the landlord and tenant to set aside the procedure of the Bill, and agree to some other sort of arbitration to be specified in the agreement. I consider that most serious.

*MR. LONG: Give me the references.

*MR. CHANNING: In the first subsection of the second clause the Bill provides that—

"The difference shall be settled by arbitration in accordance with the provisions, if any, in that behalf of any agreement between landlord and tenant, and in default of and subject to any such provisions, by arbitration under this Act in accordance with the provisions set out in the second schedule of this Act."

That is to say, the procedure contemplated under this Bill is, in the first place, to form agreements between landlord and tenant which would oust the procedure under the Act, and even subject the procedure under the Act to conditions which would alter its meaning and effect in practice.

*MR. LONG: I think the hon. Gentleman has rather misapprehended the meaning of the sub-section. The Bill provides that a tenant may go out under custom or agreement, and that even then, where there is a difference, he should have the benefit of recourse to arbitration proceedings, in accordance with the rules set out in this Bill. The power of choice rests entirely with the tenant.

*MR. CHANNING: The right hon. Gentleman has not entirely cleared up my point. I cannot myself see, even if his intentions are as he has explained, that the words do that as they stand in the present sub-section. They do admit of the evil which I contemplate, namely, that you may have a form of agreement made as a condition of the tenancy that the tenant of a farm on an estate shall accept a certain form of arbitration with respect to compensation for specific improvements, and the name of the particular arbitrator may be imposed on the tenant, I do not say compulsorily, but made a condition of the tenancy, on the estates where these arbitration clauses are introduced into leases. I rather think the hon. Member for North Hampshire took the same view of the question, because he considered that the benefit of the Bill was rather for those who did not wish to come under agreements and leases, and would only operate in their case. I must say that I think these words are exceedingly dangerous and seem to me to point to a contracting-out quite as grave, quite as serious, and quite as objectionable in its results to the agricultural tenants of the country as the great contracting clause of the Act of 1875. Unless the words are so amended as to remove this objection, I for one shall be decidedly inclined to resist the Bill at a later stage, because in that case I certainly think it would be not only a meagre, timid, and hesitating Bill, but it would be a distinctly reactionary proposal. In fact, I am bound to say that this extension of the policy of substituting agreements, whether as to the amount of compensation or as to procedure for the operation of the Act in all cases, is a most serious and most dangerous and reactionary policy. I also dissent from the view which I know is held very largely by tenant farmers as well as by hon. Members opposite, namely, that it would be a benefit to the

tenants of this country and to agriculture to have agricultural compensation cases decided according to custom instead of according to the Act. The reason for that is perfectly obvious. In many cases these customs are customs which really allot to the outgoing tenant payments for which the incoming tenant is receiving no real equivalent at all. In many cases the customs have certainly the result of crippling the capital of the incoming tenant, and that is especially apparent in Scotland in the case of sheep farms and some big agricultural farms in the south of England. I quite agree, and I think everyone will agree with what my hon. friend said with regard to the three months notice. I think it is inevitable that this Bill must be altered so as to introduce simultaneous notices of twenty-eight days before the end of the tenancy, which seems to be what most agriculturists have agreed upon. In striking out the old Section as to waste, and re-enacting portions of it, this Bill omits the essential words: "except so far as a proper return of manure to the hold ing has been made in respect of such produce so sold off or removed therefrom." So long as the tenant is keeping up the fertility of the soil he should be left free. These words should certainly be retained in the present Bill. I was glad to hear my hon. friend urge that there should be a time limit to the landlord's claim for waste, and agree with him that it should be two years. But the gravest fault I find with the present Bill, is that it gives no real encouragement to a bold policy of high cultivation and decisive and therefore profitable improvement. Nothing could be more striking than the evidence given to the Agriculture Commission of the inadequacy of improvements, and of the equipment of farms as agricultural machines, except on those great and admirably worked estates such as I have referred to, where the owner is a law in himself, and where the worst economic effects of this great depression have scarcely been felt at all. It seems to me that you must do something towards enlarging the powers of tenants to carry out for themselves, or to obtain from landlords reasonable improvements and the best equipment in order to carry on agriculture in the most effective way. In regard to permanent pasture I was glad to hear that my hon. friend supported the uggestion that two years and older seeds should be compensated for. I myself think that the recommendations of the Committee on which I sat with my hon. friend should be adopted in the Committee of this House. The Central Chamber of Agriculture insisted that permanent pasture should be transferred to Part 2 of the schedule, and that thus, by notice, the landlord should be enabled to see that the laying down and treatment of the pasture is carried out in the best and most scientific way. That places him in a position to point out to the tenant when experiments are made on unsuitable land, which would result in failure and bring him no good in the end. The recommendation that there should be compensation for increased fertility of the holding due to continuous good farming is one to which the utmost importance is attached, especially in Scotland and the North of England. It is urged that the power to award such compensation is in the hands of valuers, now, under the present Act. There are valuers who in practice do now award an additional compensation for continuous high farming. I may give an illustration of how far and with what effect this is really exercised at present. There is a well-known case in Scotland. A man had spent thousands of pounds in enriching the land by the most lavish use of fertilisers. The rent which the tenant offered for a renewal was refused, and the landlord gave the farm to another tenant. It was proved conclusively that the outlay of this man had enormously increased and enhanced the value of the land. The farm was twice re-let at a relatively very high rent. The occupier's estimate was that he had conferred £300 a year on the owner for an indefinite period. But the arbitration, although there was allowance specifically made for continuous good farming, was only to give the improving tenant £300, or one year's purchase of the added value of the farm. I should like to see the principles of the Market Gardeners Compensation Act freely and fully extended to all agricultural holdings in this country. These principles gradually grew out of the natural equities of the case, where men were employing large sums of money in agricultural work were allowed a perfectly free hand to put up buildings and make other improvements suitable and necessary to make their work a success. It seems to me if the same principles were applied generally,

and tenant farmers had a free hand to carry out either themselves or through their landlords the improvements suitable to the effective working of their holdings, it could only have the same result, and that is enormously to increase the value of the land on which those advantages were given to the tenant farmers of this country. It is possible to encourage improvement too much. It is possible to put more capital into the land than it is possible to get interest for, and what we should aim at in our legislation is to expend the fullest amount of capital on the soil that is found to earn maximum profits continuously. You can never get this under the present hand to mouth system, which involves a struggle between the two parties instead of that rational and economically sound partnership with friendly feeling and absolute security on both sides. That would be best for both, best for the highest agricultural development, best in the interests of labour, best for the whole community. This Bill is going to pass its Second Reading, and probably will be carried through this Parliament. We shall certainly put down those Amendments which we think will carry out the principles which I have endeavoured to lay before the House, and which will make this Bill a really effective instrument. I sincerely hope that some of those Amendments may be favourably considered by the right hon. Gentleman. The despairing agriculturists of this country have waited so long that they are only too eager to accept anything, and I should myself deprecate any handling of the Bill which would lose even the small advantages now proposed to be conferred. But I consider that the history of the last twenty years has imposed upon the Ministry the solemn duty of considering some of the suggestions which have been made by a number of the most practical agriculturists of the land, and of seeing whether they cannot strain a point in order to introduce some of them into this Bill before it passes into law.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I think the hon. Member for South Molton is certainly rather hard to please. From my point of view, the agricultural interest ought not to be dissatisfied with the present Bill. To say that agriculturists will be grateful for it is perhaps a rather large order, because they seldom are grateful; but, as times go, it is as good a Bill as can reasonably be expected. After all, what you require in a Bill for the Amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act is a measure which will cheapen and simplify the procedure and remove to a certain extent the difficulties in connection with leases so that tenants may be induced to put their capital into the land, and generally make things easier for the landlord and tenant all round. Some time ago I suggested to the House that the difficulty in the agricultural districts of the Eastern Counties was that twenty years ago we used to have a dozen tenants running after one farm, while now we have a dozen farms running after one tenant. I hope this Bill will help to remove that difficulty, and be of considerable assistance to the agricultural interest in that direction. I am not prepared to go as far as the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, if one can judge his views and intentions from the speech he delivered on the First Reading of this Bill, and which in great part he has done us the honour to repeat to-night. We must draw the line somewhere, and though the hon. Gentleman apparently thinks that landlords and those interested in the land are hardly to be considered as fellow-creatures, he ought to remember that if he deprives them of the opportunity of eking out a precarious existence and drives them all into the workhouse, the rates on agricultural land will be considerably heavier than at present, and we shall be worse off than before. The President of the Board of Agriculture might, however, have broadened the Bill in one or two directions. For instance, he might have adopted the advice of Mr. Read, who suggested that where there had been continuous good farming a tenant ought to get some consideration or compensation. Moreover, a tenant should be allowed to lay down land for pasture if he desires so to do, and to cultivate and sell the produce of his land precisely as he chooses, so long as the fertility of the land is not thereby impaired. Then there is the old question with regard to distraint for rent. That is a very moot and disputed point, and so long as the Central Chamber of Agriculture has not made up its mind upon the subject I do not feel disposed to say much about it. The old Act was all very well, but it was

cumbrous and expensive, and did not prevent a landlord being robbed by a dishonest tenant, and it certainly did not assist the man who was cultivating the land. I should like to impress upon the House in reference to this Agricultural Holdings Bill that rent, as far as my experience goes, has absolutely nothing to do with it. The hon. Member for East Northamptonshire spoke about competitive rents. If the hon. Gentleman would come down into Essex and compete for some of our land, it would be quite a novel experience for us, and possibly we might be able to let a little of it at remunerative prices. I was very glad a little while ago to let a farm tithe and rent free, which means that you pay a man five shillings an acre for making a small fortune out of your land. I say, therefore, that rent has practically absolutely nothing to do with the question so far as an Agricultural Holdings Act is concerned. For my part, I shall do my best to support this Bill. Half a loaf is better than no bread. Possibly in some other session in another Parliament, when we get an Agricultural Rating Act, as I hope we shall, we may have another Bill which will more largely fulfil our aspirations in this direction. I am perfectly certain the Bill will do much more good than harm. It ought to be accepted with gratitude by the agricultural interest, and I should certainly advise those whom I have the honour to represent here to take the same view of the matter as I do.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): This seems to me to be a case of "hope deferred," because we have so many times had this Bill dangled before our eyes in Queen's Speeches and otherwise that we had begun to despair a little bit when this measure was sprung upon us with a suddenness somewhat difficult to explain. Whether coming events are beginning to cast their shadows before them, I do not know. It would have been a great advantage if the Minister in charge of this Bill had given us more time before the Second Reading, so that we might have consulted our constituents and have had more time to consider the very complicated and complex provisions of the measure. I am not a lawyer, and perhaps, therefore, am not able to follow the intricacies of a Bill of this kind; but I understand that trained lawyers and even right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the front bench, who enjoy the higher scale of intelligence which belongs to gentlemen in that position, are of opinion that this Bill is badly drawn, clumsily arranged, and alogether so confused that it passes the wit of ordinary men to discover what it is all about. If that is how trained lawyers feel, what will be the position of the poor simple farmer of Aberdeenshire who tries to find out the object of the measure? On this point let me read a short extract from a letter, not of a simple farmer, but of a highly intelligent farmer in Aberdeenshire—one who has had a university education and carried on agricultural operations with great success. He says—

"The Bill looks to me to be too complex for ordinary mortals like myself to follow, but the Parliamentary enactments are all very much alike in that respect."

In that opinion I am bound to say I heartily concur. Between the confused provisions of the measure and the perpetual references from a clause of one Bill to a clause of some other Bill I am really confused beyond all measure, and if I fail to make my meaning clear to the House it will be entirely due to the mental confusion into which I have been thrown by spending this forenoon in endeavouring to find out what the Bill is about, and in trying to follow all these cross-references. I had hoped the right hon. Gentleman would have given the House a plain statement of what the Bill really proposes to enact—more especially, of how it differs from the Act of 1883, and what special advantages are gained by this Bill which were not secured by the Bill it is intended to supersede. I will not now go into the question of whether it is desirable to have a Scotch as well as an English Bill. I might explain the differences of precedure and of nomenclature, but as the question is probably to be raised later on I will not make any reference to the matter now. I understand that eventually the Bill is to be sent to one of the Standing Committees. I trust the House will strenuously oppose such a course. Considering how little work we have to do I really cannot see why we should not have the opportunity of talking on the clauses of this Bill in Committee of the whole House. All of us who represent agricultural constituencies are deeply interested in this question, and we shall feel ourselves very much aggrieved if we

are not enabled to take part in the discussion of the various clauses——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! There is a motion on the Paper to refer the Bill to a certain Committee, and the observations of the hon. Member on this point should be made when that motion comes on.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I will not pursue that matter. It is known to all of us that we cannot secure proper competition or raise prices by legislation, but we can to a certain extent remove hampering restrictions and encourage the farmer to place his capital freely and boldly in the soil. I believe that if the farmers of England and Scotland had more adequate compensation for improvements, 40 per cent. or 50 per cent. more of good results would be obtained. The universal opinion is that the Agricultural Holdings Act as it exists has not been a success, and in the evidence given before the Royal Commission there is a very wide difference of opinion as to the best means of improving the Act as it now stands. I am bound to say that a little reflection has shown me that these Acts are not required. It seems to me that the proposed benefits will be largely counterbalanced by the great millstone which will be hung round the neck of the incoming tenant. The Commission which considered this subject decided by six votes to three in favour of two out of the three Acts to which I have alluded, and they reported in favour of a land court —which I am in favour of in a modified form—and also some form of fixity of tenure. I contend that the Crofters Act has been a great success in spite of all that has been said against it. Many crofters who were once much out of hand and spirit have now become orderly, peaceful, and industrious, and they are working their farms successfully, paying their rents regularly, and are making great progress. New houses are springing up, and the condition of the crofters generally has improved in a most extraordinary way. Year after year in this House my hon. friends and myself have spoken in favour of the extension of these agricultural benefits to the part of the country we represent. We have a large number of small farmers in Aberdeenshire who carry on their work very much under crofting conditions, but who will get no benefit from the Bill in its present form. We have asked over and over again for some special agricultural concession, and, if something of the kind could have been introduced into a Bill of this sort it would have been a very valuable thing. I see the first schedule deals with improvements carried out by the tenant, but these improvements in every case in Scotland are made by the landlord. In Aberdeenshire the landlords do all the improvements, and this first schedule has very little bearing upon the position of agriculture in that county. As to the great provision of the Bill itself, it is that the tenant must get compensation for such improvements as are of value from the landlord, and he will receive such sums as fairly represent the value to an incoming tenant. I believe myself that the only satisfactory way of assessing the value of such improvements is by free sale. This Bill proposes to have this question carried out by a system of arbitration, which, I am bound to say, on the whole, is not badly arranged. The arbitrator is to be appointed by the Board of Agriculture, and I think it is right that he should be appointed by the State, and he should be an officer receiving State pay. Two or three of these officials working in Scotland would bring special knowledge to the discharge of their duties upon settled principles, which would not be the case with arbitrators selected haphazard. I have had some experience of arbitration, and the result is that the tenant's nominee goes for the tenant and the landlord's for the landlord, and the whole matter is practically settled by the referee. One of the things that is necessary is that the tenant should have the power to cultivate the land pretty much as he pleases, for the great danger is that if you have a bad tenant he will leave the farm like a squeezed orange, and it will not recover except after great labour and expense. I think safeguards should be introduced by which the tenant should be compelled to put his land into a proper state of cultivation. I wish to give credit where credit is due, and I think Lord Fife was the first landlord who gave his tenants free cultivation, for many years ago he introduced a system of lease under which the tenant got freedom of cultivation. I had the pleasure of following him, and I think this system has become pretty general. I must give

the right hon. Gentleman credit for having practically provided for freedom of cultivation in this Bill. A friend of mine experienced in law has pointed out to me that, by Clause 3 Section 2, which provides compensation for breach of contract, freedom of cultivation is practically given. I give the right hon. Gentleman credit for bringing about in this Bill an improvement which many of us have already carried out. There is the question of the consumption of grain grown on the farm. The tenant would have to keep granary books, which would be rather inconvenient. There is also an appeal to the Court of Sessions, but I think that is hardly necessary. What we want in this respect is to make the machinery of the Bill swift, sure, and cheap. These cases are first considered by the arbitrator and afterwards they are to be brought before the Court of Sessions, which makes the last state of the man worse than the first. It is certainly not a good Bill, for it is small and not far reaching enough, although I do not go so far in its condemnation as some of my hon. friends. I think it contains some very good and useful provisions, and that being so I shall certainly give it every facility, and do my best by Amendments and criticism to improve it.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I think the points which have been raised in the discussion are essentially matters for consideration in Committee. I do ask the House to consider whether a great deal of what has now been said would not have been much more effectively said in Committee. There is no principle at stake here, and, therefore, there is nothing to prolong the Second Reading discussion. To quote the words of a very large and experienced committee of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, I welcome this Bill "as a fair attempt to give effect to some of the principal recommendations in the report of the Agricultural Holdings Act Committee of that body." I reserve to myself the right to press for the adoption of more of those recommendations when this Bill gets into Committee, but these are details to be considered at a later stage. I do not think that there is any justification for the argument that tenants' rights are landlords' wrongs. All we ask is that the law should not operate unfairly against the agricultural interest. Farmers have a right to ask that they should get from the law such protection as will cover the money which they wisely and judiciously lay out, and they should have by law the power of recovering the full value of their improvements from the man who reaps the benefit of them It has been found, after seventeen years experience, that the Act of 1883 has disclosed certain defects. When that Act passed through this House the agricultural interest was not very largely represented. There is one remark made by the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire to which I wish to allude. He declared it to be "a grave scandal and a cruel wrong" that this question had not been dealt with before. I would remind the hon. Member that the party to which he belongs were in power for some years between 1883 and the present day, and they never attempted to deal with this "grave scandal and cruel wrong."

MR. CHANNING: But the Government of 1892 supported the Bill of my hon. friend the Member for South Molton.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: We all know what Government support of a private Member's Bill on a Wednesday afternoon really means. The Government of 1892 certainly, but in no Government measure on the subject. The criticism directed against this Bill has come from the avowed opponents of the policy of freedom of contract because in certain cases it will allow farmers to make their own contracts. I consider that to suggest that farmers are incapable of entering into a contract and are liable to be imposed on, is a very poor compliment, and could only be paid by men who have no personal acquaintance with the very practical and business-like character of the agricultural community. Then it has been stated that this ought to be not an amending but a consolidating Bill. As a matter of fact, even after this Bill is passed, the whole of the law of England and Scotland dealing with agricultural tenancies can easily be put into one text-book small enough to be carried in the waistcoat pocket, if not capable of being carried in the head. This Bill will make the whole law on the subject rather shorter than longer. Farmers are not so unmindful of the class of man who acts

as his own lawyer as to follow his example. If a farmer wants to consider the legal aspects of a case, it is not to the Acts of Parliament he will turn, but to a text-book which will show him the law as amended. It would be very easy indeed to draw up a short text-book of the law of England and Scotland on the subject of agricultural tenancies, and so simple are the amending and repealing sections of this Bill that anyone could do it who had a sufficient knowledge of the English and Scotch languages. The hon. Member for the South Molton Division dreamt of a code of laws which could be safely interpreted by the man in the street, but that will never be realised unless the legal profession is first of all abolished. With regard to the suggestion of a separate Act for Scotland, it is proposed that after we have finished the labour of passing an Agricultural Holdings Bill for England we should proceed to consider the very same problem and the very same remedy for Scotland, because that was the course pursued in 1883. In principle and in all their main features the two Acts are the same. I have referred to the Acts, and, with the translation of English terms into Scotch terms which I have been able to effect from my knowledge of both languages, both are practically identical. I daresay the microscopic eye of some Scotchman may be able to discover some difference, not apparent to a simple Saxon like myself, but so far as relates to anything touched on by this Bill they are practically identical. There are two differences—in Scotland four months previous notice is claimed before the end of a tenancy, and in England only two months is claimed, and the other difference is that in Scotland there is one referee unless the parties agree to two, whereas in England there are two referees unless the parties agree to one. The differences are immaterial, because the Bill abolishes previous notice altogether, and as regards referees the Bill adopts the Scotch and not the English method. I want to ask hon. Members for Scotland is it really worth while taking up the time of Parliament with a Scotch Bill, simply for the sake of calling an umpire, a "third's man," instead of having an interpretation clause in the present Bill. I should like to ask a more weighty and important question. Is it worth while to divide the agricultural forces in this House, already weak enough, by setting English county Members to work on a Bill for England, and Scotch county Members to work on a Bill for Scotland? Surely it is better that the whole agricultural party should deal with this Bill, which will have the same effect in both countries. By this Bill the Scotch farmer will get much that he wants, and he is canny enough to recognise that a Bill in the hand is worth any prospect of legislation in the undefined future. I hope hon. Members for Scotland will not press their opposition, but will allow this Bill to pass its Second Reading, and then join with us in making it as perfect as we can in Committee.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I desire to answer at once the appeal of the hon. Gentleman. He puts to Scotch Members, generally, the question whether it is worth while to have a Scotch Bill. I will answer in some detail that question by and by, but Members on this side of the House who hail from Scotland share in the opinion expressed by my hon. friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire, that this Bill as it is drawn will produce a maximum of confusion, because of its draughtsmanship, particularly with reference to our country, and in such a degree that it will require half a generation of judicial decisions in order to reconcile it with the main body of Scotch law. I agree that in this discussion we should avoid purely Committee points, and although I shall have to comment strongly on the draughtsmanship of the measure, I shall only do so on the broad ground that it is in point of form the very worst kind of legislation, namely, legislation by reference. Agriculturists in Scotland have waited very long indeed for some remedial measure. A promise of such a measure was made in the Queen's Speech in the first session of this Parliament and in each succeeding Queen's Speech, but I feel bound to say that I do not think that this measure will prove very satisfactory. On opening the Bill one's enthusiasm is at once damped, because the very first sub-section of Section 1 excludes all that class of tenants—the sitting tenants—whom Sir James Caird described as the backbone of agriculture. But the real test of the substantial value of

this Bill will be found in the schedules. The whole question, so far as principle is concerned, is in Sub-section 1—namely, that the test to be applied as regards compensation is the value of the improvements to the incoming tenant, but I deeply regret that Her Majesty's Government have shown little confidence in that principle in the details of the schedules. The fact is that, under that principle, there is security to the landlord, and he pays, as he ought, only for value received. If the tenant got more it would be unfair to the landlord; if he got less it would be unfair to the tenant. What we say with regard to the schedules is that we hope the House and the Government will show more trust in the principle that has been laid down. Under the details of the schedules it is still permitted to the landlord to pocket in a very large measure the increased value of the holding on the technical plea that he did not give his consent to his property being improved. That is practically a repetition, not an advance on the principle laid down in the Act of 1883. It is true that there is an increase in the number of cases in which compensation is obtainable if notice had been given by the tenant to the landlord that the improvements were to be executed. We thought, of course, that that increase would include substantial and cardinal things, such as permanent fences or buildings, or permanent pasture, but I am bound to say that agriculturists in the north will be especially disappointed that the additions to the schedule do not include substantial or important matters, but such small and trivial affairs in the main as gardens, orchards, or osier beds all under one acre. Intense dissatisfaction will be produced by the introduction of these trivial matters instead of far weightier matters of law. Under the system that prevails at present the labour, skill, and capital of the tenant are practically confiscated. The best and most industrious class of tenants in Scotland have had year by year their fortunes depleted by nothing less than confiscation, and we did think that there would be some diminution of that state of affairs, which in many instances has approached almost a scandal. Instead, however, of a diminution of these cases, we have practically a re-affirmation of the whole of them. With reference to the drafting of this Bill, it is the worst and most confused which has been produced in recent times either by a Government or a private Member. As regards Scotland, it is legislation by reference. Clause 2 refers to the Scotch Acts of 1883 and 1889. Now, the question has been asked, why should there not be a simple and convenient code in one statute? The hon. Member for Thirsk appears to see the force of that contention, because he suggests that people should not have to ascertain the law from the language used by hon. Members in this House, but should have the assistance of commentators in text books. That, in my opinion, would be an abrogation on the part of this House, not only of its functions, but of its absolute duty. In this Bill there are fourteen clauses, but there are also clauses in the schedules fifty-seven in number—that is to say, we have a Bill of seventy-one clauses. The Scotch Act of 1883 contains forty-three clauses and seventeen schedules. The sixty items in the Scotch Act are represented by seventy-one items in the present Bill, and as a result our Scotch Bill is reduced to a condition of tatters—"a thing of shreds and patches"—which will render confusion worse confounded. I really protest on behalf of the Scotch agricultural interest against this method of dealing with this question. It has been asked by the hon. Member for Thirsk, why should Scotland demand a separate measure? I will answer that question. Scotland demands a separate measure for a variety of reasons, the principal of which is that the whole history of the land tenure of England and of Scotland is essentially diverse, and the progress of agriculture is also different. In the next place, our system, not only as regards history, but also as regards legal tenure, is as different as if the two systems were not only in different parts of one country, but in different planets. We speak a totally different language in these matters, and, as we think, a much more sensible and intelligible language. I have asked the meaning of the expression in this measure, "cesser of a contract of tenancy," and I have been told by English lawyers that not only is it not sound English law, but that it is not a good English expression. Yet that expression is incorporated in this Bill by way of an improvement on the definition of the words "determination of tenancy," which is

already defined in our Scotch Acts as the determination of the lease. Our Scotch judges will have to puzzle over what is known as "the mind of Parliament," when, instead of the "determination of the lease," they will have to interpret the new expression "the cesser of a contract of tenancy." That is a sample of the kind of foreign language introduced into this Bill. But my final reason for a Scotch measure is, that the whole history of Parliamentary dealings with reference to this subject entitles us to say that we ought to have a separate Scotch measure, as we had in 1883. I am not aware that there is any confusion or difficulty in putting into the Scotch language for our own country the requirements of Scotch agriculturists, and I do not see why any Government should endeavour to combine in one measure for England and Scotland legislation with reference to different systems of land tenure and different systems of agricultural holdings. It has been demonstrated that every consideration of convenience, example, and precedent is in favour of a separate measure, so that we shall know our own law in our own language in our own country. That is what we desire, and what Parliament has been gracious enough to afford to us in the past, and there is no reason why we should be treated differently now, or in a more cavalier fashion than the rest of the country. Of course it may be said that it was to save the draftsman trouble. If that be the plea it is a petty and contemptible excuse for a failure of Parliamentary duty. It will put every landlord and farmer in Scotland into trouble for a generation, in order that the drafting department of the Government may be saved trouble. There will be animadversion from the humblest farmer up to the judicial bench against this method of legislation, which is so derogatory to the true interests in point of principle and intelligibility of our Parliamentary proceedings. This bad, confusing, distracting Bill has been drafted deliberately. I will give the House one or two illustrations of what I mean with regard to the confused draftsmanship of this Bill. The Bill consists of fourteen clauses, and Section 7 does not apply to Scotland at all. Again, Subsection 4 of Section 3 does not apply to Scotland, but it is in respect to Section 3 that we approach the climax. Section 3 states that the powers of the county court under the principal Act—which appears to be the Agricultural Holdings Act, 1883, but which later, we learn, is nothing of the kind—with respect to charges shall be exercised by the Board of Agriculture, and accordingly the Board of Agriculture shall be substituted for the county court in Sections 29, 30, 31, 32, and 39 of that Act. But Section 10 states that references to the principal Act, and to Sections 29, 30, 31, 32, and 34 thereof, shall be construed as references to the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883, and to Sections 24, 26, 25, and 30 thereof respectively, and that Sections 31 and 39 of the principal Act shall not apply at all. I say that is perfectly grotesque, and that Scotland is entitled to better treatment. Again, in another sub-section there is a reference which, as far as Scotland is concerned, is a reference to nothing in the world. I make no reflection on the person who drew this Bill. A Scotch writer, Dr. John Brown, said that there was a deal of fine confused feeding in a sheep's head. Now in this Bill there is a good deal of fine confused feeding, but the fineness is on the minimum scale and the confusion is on the maximum scale. The climax of confusion, however, is reached in the schedules. When one looks at these schedules the wonder is what is left of Scotch legislation. Section 1 of the Scotch Bill is repealed, then a few sections are left alone, and Sections 6 and 8 are repealed, and then a gap begins. But they are not content with repealing some sections and leaving other sections alone, but at Section 16 they say that is repealed from the beginning thereof to "within the county," and from "the amount awarded" to the end of the section. This is the gift which the Minister of Agriculture is giving to the Scotch farmers! I never knew anything more confused. It would require an army of commentators to make it intelligible. There is no system, no code, no intelligibility, no convenience, no coherence about it. I can remember nothing in literature like it, except the reference that Captain Cuttle made to the qualities of his watch. I can fancy the Minister of Agriculture saying to the Scotch farmer, "A parting gift, my lad. If you put it back half an hour in the morning, and a quarter of an hour now and again in the

afternoon, it is a watch that will do you credit." That is exactly the situation in which the Scotch farmer finds himself. It is as if the legislative watch had been worn by some legislative Captain Cuttle. It is said that the Scotch legal authorities were consulted upon this matter. In those days of verdant hope regarding agricultural reform in 1896, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture was asked a question as to whether there would be a separate Scotch measure, and this is the answer which he gave to the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire—

"The provisions of the Bill to amend the Agricultural Holdings Act, of which I have given notice, will certainly be made applicable to Scotland as well as to England, but whether by means of a separate clause or clauses in the English Bill, or by a Bill specially dealing with Scotland, is a matter which is at present under consideration by the Scottish legal authorities."*

*MR LONG: In 1896, the answer I gave was to the effect that I was taking the advice of the Scotch legal authorities. Between that time and the time of introducing this Bill, I received that advice, and in conjunction with the Scotch Department, and entirely with their approval, I determined to adopt the plan embodied in the Bill.

MR. THOMAS SHAW: I quite agree that the right hon. Gentleman is responsible for the scheme of the Bill, and I hold him responsible for defects of a very grave order in it; but I am not going for one moment to acquit any department of responsibility for any advice given in regard to this matter. I say that all the precedents were entirely in our favour as to the necessity for a separate Bill for Scotland, and we shall listen with some interest to know why the precedents have been departed from on the present occasion. I suppose there is a kind of policy which is represented in high quarters at present of which we had a cynical intimation from the Financial Secretary for War, who, in answer to a question, said that Scotland was a part of England.* [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] I hope the hon. Gentleman's life will be spared when he goes north of the Tweed. I suppose that, by parity of reasoning, England may be called a part of Birmingham. These jokes may be good enough for Englishmen, and they may pass in England, but when you put a joke of that kind, even an English joke, into a Bill, you are going beyond the score. I want to know particularly on behalf of my Scotch friends what is the reason why, with regard to arbitration, you should substitute the Board of Agriculture sitting in London for the Sheriff, and the practice before the Sheriff's Court which we have in Scotland for the nomination of arbitrators. The Sheriff is on the spot. If you think he has not sufficient knowledge of agriculture, he has certainly much knowledge of the locality to be dealt with, and the men in the district. But if you desire to have an official other than the Sheriff, surely there are numerous Scotch boards capable of appointing arbitrators, instead of going to London for the nomination by the Board of Agriculture, by which system we may get gentlemen from Cornwall sent to arbitrate in Aberdeen, or gentlemen from Kent sent to Shetland to decide the compensation to be given to a Shetland farmer. We are perfectly satisfied with the Scotch system, and we prefer a Scotch nomination. I do say we are entitled to contrast our position in regard to this matter with that in Ireland. Ireland has recently had the appointment of a separate Board of Agriculture, but Scotland, instead of being so treated according to our needs and our history, is to be treated as an annexe of England, with all its inconveniences. There is a perfect infatuation abroad in dealing with Scotland, and with our own institutions. I never knew a Government that was so chary of giving Scotch legislation according to Scotch ideas. I know the meaning of it. It is obvious. If there were a separate Bill for Scotland we would see in every division the great majority of the Scotch Members on one side, and the Government and the majority of English Members on the other. Hence the Government do not like separate Scotch measures. I would like further to add that there has been in recent history in regard to Scotch legislation one fact which is of the greatest value with regard to what I call the advance by way of amendment on Scotch measures. We had a separate Bill in 1883. Now there are contained in this Bill various amendments in the schedule in regard to the

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxxvii., page 237.
† Ibid., Vol. lxxx., p. 480.

subject of arbitration, the preference for a single arbitrator, and so forth. Will the House believe that we had a separate Scotch Bill in 1889 amending the Scotch Bill of 1883, and those very things which were referred to by an hon. Gentleman opposite as a great advantage in this Bill, we had eleven years ago, because we had a separate Bill which could be separately amended? I think it is a pity that the Government have departed from that good rule of having separate Scotch measures which are capable of separate amendment. I am bound to say that if that Bill of 1889 had been introduced as an amendment of a compound Bill for England and Scotland it would have had but a very poor chance of passing through the House of Commons then. I protest against the Bill on account of its draughtsmanship. I think, particularly in regard to Scotland, the draughtsmanship is confused almost to the point of being fantastic. I would express the hope that it is not too late to permit of Scotland being treated, according to its needs and its records, both from an agricultural and a national point of view, by a separate measure.

*MR. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon): I do not propose to detain the House for more than a few moments, but I could not help thinking, in listening to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that he hardly did justice to his well-known powers and legal acumen in describing the hopeless state of confusion to which he found himself reduced by the perusal of this Bill. This Bill amends legislation which already applies to Scotland as well as to England, and it gives effect to no fewer than eleven out of the thirteen recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. It only omits to give effect to two—the recommendation that there should be a schedule of landlords' dilapidations, and that in the case of tenancies from year to year there should be a limit to the landlord's claim under Section 6 for waste to two years. But this Bill gives effect to four or five additional recommendations which were made by the committee of the Central Chamber of Agriculture. Further, it provides a simplified method of procedure for giving compensation to which the tenant is entitled, and I think that when that is considered it can hardly be said that it is a very bad Bill. The main objections to the Bill have turned upon the fact that a certain number of recommendations made by the Chamber of Agriculture and other persons of authority in farming matters have not been adopted. But that fact does not in itself constitute any serious indictment against the Bill, because, as I understand, the whole of this legislation in regard to compensation has hitherto taken the form not of imposing fresh terms upon unwilling parties, but of recognising and giving definiteness and extension to those reasonable arrangements which had already to a large extent become customary owing to the spread of enlightenment among those engaged in agriculture. Therefore, in abstaining at this stage from discussing in detail the complaints as to what is omitted from the Bill, it may be urged generally, and as a matter of principle underlying the whole of this Agricultural Holdings legislation, that the Government are not entitled to take the wishes of this or that body, however well informed, and make them compulsory all over the country as part of the usual conditions of tenancy unless they have already been so largely adopted voluntarily as to have been thoroughly tried by experience. For, what were the steps by which this Agricultural Holdings legislation became possible? With the introduction of improvements and scientific farming the defenceless position of the out-going tenant in respect of improvements and acts of husbandry was seen by the most enlightened landowners and land agents to be unjustifiable, and most injurious to good farming. The agreements voluntarily made on the best managed estates, between the most enlightened landlords and tenants, led the way in reform. Smaller properties and scattered tenancies here and there in the neighbourhood thought what had been found suitable and fair on the big estate would do for them, and thus, gradually, the "custom of the country" arose of making such and such allowances. But at this stage of progress a fresh difficulty presented itself. When a tenancy was determined and any dispute arose, there was often great doubt as to whether the custom to be relied upon really applied to that precise locality, or whether it would be wiser to rely upon a slightly different custom which was also very prevalent at no great distance from the farm in question. The area of each

custom was necessarily vague, and, to avoid the perplexities thus arising, legislation was invoked to give definiteness and universality of application to such customs as had stood the test of actual experience, and only needed to be freed from the doubts and vagueness and opportunity for litigation incidental to them. But such customs only applied where the agreement was silent, and therefore the Acts were confined to recognising certain rules and methods of compensation as reasonable and proper to be applied unless the parties preferred to make their own arrangements. A great deal of what is heard about the power of contracting out is really directed against the continuance of that perfect freedom of contract which existed always side by side with those customs of the country whose vagueness was remedied by the Acts, but which never had any application in over-ruling any agreement which the parties thought fit to make. Now, judging the present Bill by these principles, a great deal may be said in favour of the decision to refuse admission to some of the proposals urged from various quarters. And wherever something which is thought very desirable by large and influential bodies of agriculturists has been refused admission to the Bill, I presume it is on the ground that that particular matter is considered to be not yet sufficiently adopted in different parts of the country to be treated as a custom requiring legislative recognition to remove uncertainty in its application, and that it is better to leave those who insist strongly upon it to make it a matter of agreement. Of the matters which have been omitted, the question of placing the laying down of permanent pasture in the second part of the first schedule, instead of in the first part, is undoubtedly one of the most important in the estimation of the farmers. But, on the other hand, it is not one of those which the Royal Commission saw its way to endorse, and therefore, in the absence of any strong body of evidence that landlords were unreasonably withholding consent—certainly a very large acreage had been so laid down within the last ten or fifteen years—probably the Government regard this as one of the points which should be left to agreement. But I believe that the farmers attach no less importance, perhaps even greater importance, to the proposal that two years and older seeds, where there is a good plant, and the land is clean and in good heart, should be placed in the third part of the schedule, as a matter for compensation irrespective of either notice to or consent by the landlord. On this point I think the Government may be asked even now to re-consider the wishes of the farmers, and I desire to join my honourable friend the Member for North Hampshire in the remarks which he made in that direction. I think there is also a good deal to be said, in the interests of the parties and for promoting the speedy settlement of disputes, for adopting the proposal of the Royal Commission that the period in respect of which the landlords might claim for waste or breach, under Section 6 of the Act, should be limited in the case of tenancies from year to year to a period of two years. On this point, however, at the proper stage it will be necessary to discuss the effect of the repeal of Section 6 and the substitution of other provisions. But on the point of putting the two years and older seeds into the third part of the schedule, I feel sure that if the right hon. Gentleman can see his way to meet the farmers, he will find he has in no way rendered the Bill less acceptable to the agricultural interests generally. In regard to the Scotch claim for separate legislation, I think the hon and learned Member for the Hawick Burghs is not quite correct in saying that there is no precedent whatever for joining the two countries in one Bill, in spite of divergencies of language and even of practice, where there are strong grounds of convenience for doing so. I remember myself when the law regarding bills of exchange—a law largely originating in custom—was codified, the admirable way in which the Scotch lawyers worked with the English lawyers, and several compromises were effected, so as to secure uniformity for the whole country, and no grievance has existed since. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having produced a really useful measure.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire E.): The hon. Member for the Abingdon Division has slightly misapprehended the speech of the hon. and learned Member for the Hawick Burghs. We did not object at all in regard to the Bills of Exchange Act to uniform legislation for England and Scotland. The point of my hon. and learned friend was

that on the subject of agricultural legislation we have had in the past separate measures and a separate system of administration to which we are accustomed, which we know well, and trust well; and we claim here our right that this subject shall be treated separately in the future as in the past by separate Acts of Parliament, so that our constituents may clearly apprehend it without difficulty. I do not propose to follow the observations of my hon and learned friend, because he has analysed with great skill the details of this Bill. The hon. Member for Thirsk made an unfortunate observation when he appealed to our human instincts not to prolong this debate. He went on to say that when a Liberal party was in power they did not amend the Agricultural Holdings Act. The Liberal party were in office up to 1886, but I do not think that Mr. Gladstone with the Home Rule question on hand could have attempted to amend the Act which had only been passed two years before.

*MR. LONG: The hon. Gentleman appears to have forgotten that the Liberal party were in office from 1892 to 1895.

MR. BUCHANAN: In 1893, 1894, and 1895, upon every occasion of the introduction of the Queen's speech, an Amendment was moved from the opposite side of the House clamouring for legislation on this subject, and complaining of the neglect of legislation on agriculture by the Liberal Government. The Amendment in 1893 was moved by the right hon. Member for Ripon, in 1894 by the hon. Baronet the Member for Central Sheffield, and in 1895 by the hon. Member for Basingstoke. Not content with that, in 1894 the hon. and gallant Member for South-east Essex moved the adjournment of the House as a matter of definite public importance on the 13th April,* and was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture.

*MR. LONG: Quote my words.

MR. BUCHANAN: The right hon. Gentleman asks me to quote his words. I will quote his words.

*MR. LONG: I beg pardon; I misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. I understood him to state that I moved an Amendment as to the necessity of the amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act.

MR. BUCHANAN: In so far as the neglect of the interest of agriculture included the question of tenants' compensation. I venture to quote the right hon. Gentleman's words. They are very apt words, and better express what we think than any words of mine. In February, 1893, when supporting a motion for the adjournment of the House, the President of the Board of Agriculture said—

> "A number of Members opposite have been returned to the House on an agricultural platform. During the General Election they never tired of telling their constituents how much they would do if they were returned to the House, but they have not shown any great eagerness in this debate to redeem the pledges they have given."*

Does not that apply to the present condition of affairs? When the present Government came into power at the last General Election, and this Parliament assembled in August, 1895, my hon. and gallant friend the Member for East Norfolk moved an Amendment to the Address in the exact words of the hon. Member for Basingstoke, which was received with very great indignation by the hon. Member for Basingstoke and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture, though they had previously supported a similar Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture on the 16th of August, 1895, said—

> "When the right time came they would be prepared with their proposals and suggestions—not merely to lay them before the House, but to give them practical effect."†

That was nearly five years ago. What happened shortly after that? On the very first day of the session of 1896 the President of the Board of Agriculture gave notice from the front bench that on an early day he would ask leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law in regard to agricultural holdings, but from that day until March 12th, 1900—a lapse of more than four years—no further step was taken to further the subject, by a party in possession of a majority of 140! Now after four years we have the Bill before us.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. xxiii., page 342.

* See *The Parliamentary Debates* [Fourth Series], Vol. viii., page 704.

† See *Ibid.*, Vol. xxxvi., page 244.

The hon. Member for Basingstoke speaks of this Bill as a small amending Bill, and the hon. and gallant Member for South-east Essex considers it as good a Bill as you can expect under the circumstances. I do not think these words very enthusiastic. They remind me of the Indian proverb, that it is better to have a one-eyed maternal uncle than no uncle at all. That is the way these hon. Gentlemen are prepared to support this Bill instead of a Bill of a more substantial character. But let us see what the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues said they were going to do to relieve agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman in the very short speech he made when he introduced this Bill told us he was going to settle all the difficulties between owners and occupiers of land; but when we come to see the Bill, and listen to the debate on it, I think that the performance of the right hon. Gentleman lags very far indeed behind his promise on that occasion. In the month of December, 1898, the right hon. Gentleman, in addressing the annual meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, spoke of the necessity of amending the law in regard to the occupation of the land, and hoped he would be in a position to do so very soon. Can any man reasonably say that this very limited and attenuated Bill deals in a satisfactory way with the great question of the ownership and occupation of land? But the President of the Board of Agriculture is not the only member of Her Majesty's Government who has made statements and given promises, here and elsewhere, as to what they were going to do for agriculture. The Colonial Secretary has made promises, and given rise to hopes no effectual fulfilment of which has ever been given. I am not going to quote from any speech of the right hon. Gentleman in his unregenerate days, but from a speech he made on July 22nd, 1895. That was in the middle of the General Election, when the right hon. Gentleman held the important post of Colonial Secretary, and when he was looked upon as one of the most important members of the Government. He has told us that the old Government could not give time to English agriculture, but they could give time for the Irish Land Bill, and then he made the usual allusion to the honest English tenants and the dishonest Irish tenants, and he went on to say that compensation for improvements would be given by the Unionists if they were returned to power; that the Unionists wished to give to the English farmer the opportunities and facilities possessed by the Irish tenantry of becoming owners instead of occupiers of their holdings, and so far as the Colonial Secretary could, he would endeavour of persuade the Government to bring in a scheme, on the lines of the Irish Land Bill, to apply to England and Scotland. No action whatever has been taken by the Government, and for a Minister to go down and contest an election with specious promises of that character, and not make an effort to carry them out, is a gross imposture. In view of the promises held out to the agricultural electors of this country at the time of the General Election, I think the Bill which we have heard discussed to-night cannot fail to be considered unsatisfactory. It only deals with the merest fringe of the question, and is a beggarly redemption of the promises made to the agricultural interest by its promoters and supporters. I have heard with great interest the statement made with regard to the new scheme of arbitration; but having studied this Bill very carefully, I fail to see where the cheapness comes in as compared with the present method of procedure. That method would be one of the best which could be adopted if it could be made cheap, and I hope we shall have some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman with regard to it. I would suggest that the work be carried out by an arbiter. In special cases there might be two and an umpire. Appeals to the High Court in England or to the Court of Session in Scotland are to be deprecated. Now, with regard to the Bill, we have overwhelming evidence in the Report of the Royal Commission that the system of the Agricultural Act of 1883, both in England and Scotland, has lamentably failed. It has absolutely failed to carry out the purposes it was intended to serve. Surely it would have been worth the while of the Government under those circumstances to start *de novo*, and endeavour to establish a new method for the benefit of the tenants in the future. I am not going to suggest new legislation, but in the Crofters Acts there are provisions not only for the land court and fixity of tenure, but for giving the tenants com-

pensation for their improvements, and if the Government were to introduce a simple method such as exists in the Crofters Acts they would effect a real and fundamental reform. The landlord and tenant would endeavour to agree as before, but if they did not agree the Board of Agriculture would appoint an arbiter. The general demand in Scotland has been that official arbiters should be appointed, so that farmers could send to the Sheriff and an arbiter could be appointed and quickly settle the difference between the landlord and the tenant. There will be great disappointment in Scotland that such a scheme has not been carried out. This Bill will not apply to improvements which have been or are now being made, but only to such improvements as are commenced after it comes into force. That is carrying its non-retrospective aspect to great lengths. Then, again, if there are suitable and proper tribunals to assess improvements there is no need for any schedule. Of the new matters in the schedule I can only find osier beds, which Scotland does not possess, and orchards, of which she has very few. They are very small alterations indeed from the existing schedule of improvements. I join with the hon. Member for Hawick in what he said against the President of the Board of Agriculture having anything to do with this Department in future. The Board of Agriculture is an English Department having no office in Scotland, and its Minister, always an Englishman, though, no doubt, conversant with English affairs, cannot be expected to be conversant with Scottish affairs. I have a great admiration for the right hon. Gentleman and the way he dealt with the rabies question, but no one knows better than himself what a farce his connection with Scotland is. He goes down there once a year, and attends a conference of the agricultural societies in the afternoon and a dinner in the evening. I have never attended these conferences myself, but I understand that in the afternoon speeches are made to him, and I am sorry to say at him, and in the evening he makes a speech, when I am happy to say his hearers are better prepared to listen to him than earlier in the day. But that is not business: it is not the way we want the agricultural affairs of Scotland dealt with. Our countries and customs are distinct, and this is the first step which has been taken for extending the administration of departments in England to a purely Scotch matter, because by this Bill we are giving the Board of Agriculture a similar position in Scotland to that which it holds in England. Scotch farmers generally prefer to deal with the Sheriff, whom they know and whose mode of work they know, rather than with a new Department like the Board of Agriculture, which dwells a long way off and which cannot be fully alive to their interests. The benefits, such as they are, conferred by this Bill are meant to be valuable to all tenants, but when it is worked out in view of agriculture in Scotland, it will be found that the Bill is largely inoperative. It contemplates farms of a large size, and a system of tenure under which improvements are effected by the landlord. It contemplates giving facilities and advantages to the larger class of tenants, which is the only class which was able to take advantage of the Act of 1883; the smaller tenants of Aberdeenshire could not use the Act of 1883, nor can they use this Act. The cost forbids it, and the procedure forbids it. To them this Bill will be a dead letter. In Aberdeenshire in 1881 there were 11,300 farms, of which over 6,000 were under £30 in annual value, and 3,300 under £10, and 2,700 under £100. More than half of the men represent that class to which this procedure is inapplicable. In West Aberdeenshire there are 3,045 farms, two-thirds of which are under £30, and in those cases all the improvements have been made by the tenant, and all the improvements in cultivation also. The late Government endeavoured to benefit these tenants by extending the operations of the Crofters Acts to them, and exception was taken because we were proposing measures of emergency exceeding the then present needs. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman now the First Lord of the Treasury said that, in his opinion, small tenants had an absolute right to be protected in their improvements, and he would like to see that protection extended in a safe form to all cases where the tenant had taken pains to improve the holding which he occupied. I venture to say these tenants have been unable to take advantage of the Act of 1883, and will be unable to take advantage of this when it is passed. To four-fifths of the tenants of Scotland it will not

apply at all, and the remainder, by its operation, will obtain far less than their just demands.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): It must indeed be gratifying to the Government that the only criticism which this Bill has met with from the other side has been a rehearsal of advanced proofs of election literature, and yet such has practically been the case. The hon. Member for Hawick Burghs has said that there would be some difficulty in translating the terms of the measure into his native tongue, but I am afraid that the hon. Gentleman has not appreciated his own powers as a translator, and I am quite certain that he must very unduly under-estimate the ability of his fellow countrymen—the ability of the Scotch tenant to discover anything which might be to his material interest and advantage, put it in what language and in what terms you like. In my opinion the right hon. Gentleman and the Government are to be heartily congratulated on this measure. No doubt the incubation of the measure has been long; it has been mentioned in many a gracious Speech from the Throne, and it has been subject to many a kindly reference at many of the festive gatherings following the agricultural meetings. It is the production of three gentlemen whose names are on the back of the Bill—gentlemen of marked ability, great perseverance, and great resource—and I can hardly suppose that the long period that these three gentlemen have been bending over the cauldron has caused the soup absolutely to boil away. I say that the Government and the House are to be heartily congratulated on this measure, because it is a source of real congratulation that after so many deliberations, after such careful investigations, and after so much criticism they have had in dealing with this subject, they find that the relationship between landlord and tenant is of such a nature that all that is needed to make it absolutely perfect is to be found within the four corners of this Bill. The Government is also to be congratulated that the measure has been read with the most friendly feelings, at all events by those whom it is intended to benefit, whilst the hostility to the measure has been confined to the conventionalities of debate, the sort of conventionalities which we hear against every single measure which does not come from the other side. The only thing I have not heard it called is an "insidious measure." We have heard all the other usual comments, such as "it is not doing what it is intended to do," "it goes too far," "it does not go far enough," and so on. It must indeed be a very great matter of satisfaction to us all to know that so little is required to make the relationship of landlord and tenant work smoothly and easily for the future. The fact is there is no doubt about it that the ordinary agricultural tenant cherishes the idea that he can make a much better bargain for himself than we in this House can make for him, and I think he is right. I will point out one or two apparent contradictions in this Bill. Sub-clause 3 says that in ascertaining the compensation any benefits which the landlord has given are to be taken into account. But in Sub-clause 5 we find that it says that nothing in this section—and therefore not the benefits—nothing in this section is to abridge the right of the tenant to claim compensation under customs agreements or otherwise. Well, as I understand it, this means that if the tenant thinks he can do better for himself by not taking into consideration the benefits which he has already got from the landlord, he is at liberty to throw him overboard altogether. I hardly think that this is a fair and satisfactory way of dealing with this subject, but I believe a good deal may depend upon that mysterious word "otherwise," which perhaps there may be some difficulty in translating into the Scotch tongue. When I had some elements of law instilled physically into my brain, I remember one of the maxims in those days was that the law existed for the benefit of people who took care of their own interests, and not for those who slept upon their rights, and it seems rather a violation of that ancient maxim to say that the tenant may claim by custom, by agreement, or otherwise. Thus the man who has slept on his rights, who has been perfectly careless of his interests, is to be allowed to come in and claim all the advantage in this, which, after all, I suppose, is a measure of considerable substance. I think it is a great pity that we should have introduced such words as "custom agreements and otherwise" for ascertaining the compensation. While

we were about it we should have made a measure which was quite comprehensive and inclusive, one which could be recorded both in the English tongue and the Scottish tongue as "The Charter of the Agricultural Tenant's Freedom; price twopence." He might be able to buy it, take it home, and study it; look upon it as his own measure, and hang it up in his sitting-room; and there he could have it in front of him at a very moderate price, so that at all events he might please himself by imagining that he understands an Act of Parliament. After all, there is a great deal to praise in this measure. I know the difficulties of Parliamentary procedure, and I am quite aware in a session such as this it might be a little difficult to pass a complete measure dealing with this subject. The main feature of the Bill is the simplicity of its procedure. That is a most praiseworthy object which commands sympathy. One of the objections to the principal Act was the elaborate nature of its procedure, and the immense number of notices and forms which had to be exchanged between the parties. It has sometimes seemed to me that those procedure clauses in the principal Act had been framed by law stationers. I cannot imagine any other human being who could have compiled them than those who sell forms at so much a dozen. It is very praiseworthy that the procedure for assessing compensation under the principal Act should be so much simplified as it is in this measure. Provision is made for settling disputes by one arbitrator unless the parties otherwise desire; but why not be content with making it the real state of things that arbitration shall be before a single arbitrator? The second part of the clause, providing a hearing before two arbitrators, is purely voluntary. The tenant is not obliged to take advantage of it, and I do not think he ought to be encouraged to. He does not want an Act of Parliament to say that he may if he likes. I cannot congratulate the Government on their proposal to abolish penal rents. If they are abolished there ought to be some such provision as this: "The tenant shall not break up old pasture until he has given sufficient notice to the landlord to enable him to apply for an injunction in a Court of Chancery." It would not be an unreasonable thing that a landlord should have sufficient notice to defend his rights in a court of law, if he thinks fit to do so. It is a thing of which you cannot measure damage in pounds, shillings and pence. As far as I know, penal rent has never worked injustice or been complained of by any man on whom it has been executed. I am not altogether satisfied with the provision as to compensation as given in the first clause, though I am very well satisfied to see that expression about "the inherent capabilities of the soil" disappear. I think it might be well worth considering whether the amount awarded should be the value to an incoming tenant. I would rather suggest that it should be the capitalised value of the amount by which the value of the holding in the open market at the time of the determination of the tenancy is increased by improvement. That would be fair to both parties, and would give a standard which the arbitrators could work by and would have no difficulty in adopting. I have only one other word to say with regard to the measure, and that is that I greatly regret that the right hon. Gentleman has not dealt with one subject, and made a complete and entire sweep of what I consider to be, after all, an unreal and unsubstantial grievance. I am sorry he has not dealt with the sitting tenant. I say it is an unreal and a theoretical grievance. In theory it is difficult to justify. It is difficult to see why a man who elects to remain in his holding, perhaps at an increased rent, perhaps at the same rent when it might have been let to another man at a lower rent, and does not face the discomforts, and in some cases the expense, of moving, should be in a worse position. Theoretically it is a grievance, but, on the other hand, it is an unreal and unsubstantial grievance. I think it is a pity the right hon. Gentleman, who has dealt with other matters in so satisfactory a manner, has not swept away that last real shadow of a platform grievance. I am certain it does not pass the wit of mankind to discover words to do it. I have felt it my duty to criticise in no hostile or unfriendly manner the proposals of my right hon. friend. I congratulate him on having produced a Bill which sweeps away an immense amount of antiquated rubbish in procedure. It is a Bill which I believe will be appreciated and welcomed by those whom he desires to benefit, and will be approved alike by landlords and tenants.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): The position of the Scotch tenants differs considerably from that of the tenants in England. My hon. friend the Member for East Aberdeen has already pointed that out to a certain extent. The essential difference between the English tenants and the crofters has been recognised by legislative enactment. We have separate legislation for the crofters; and what is the reason of that? It is because, whereas in England the landlord almost invariably makes the improvements, in the crofting districts the tenants make the improvements. Therefore, the presumption in the one case is that the improvements are made by the landlord, and in the other case the presumption is that the improvements are made by the tenant, and it is evident that the same procedure is not suitable to meet these two sets of cases. The improvements made by the crofters are not of a small kind, but of the most solid kind. It is the custom in Scotland for the crofter to reclaim the land, to drain it, to clear away boulders, and actually to build houses upon the land. He is not in a position to be compared with the English tenant who is simply claiming for unconsumed manures. My constituents are in almost exactly the same position as the tenants in the crofting counties across the Spey. The small farmers in the north of Scotland are in an altogether different position from those in Hampshire or Gloucestershire, where they do not dream of making improvements. The extreme inconvenience of applying the same law to both cases is at once shown if we look at the first schedule, in which buildings are excluded. I have heard some hon. Gentleman say that it would be absurd to put buildings in the first schedule, because the landlord almost always makes the buildings, and that it is quite an unusual thing for the tenant to make them. It is evident that an Act which applies to both classes is not a suitable one for the people in my part of the country. The fact is that the people of Banffshire and Aberdeenshire do not differ from those in the crofting counties in the north-west of Scotland in any respect except that they do not go in for raids and disturbances. I have very little doubt, though I say it with regret, that if the area of disturbances had extended to that part the people there would probably have been included in the Crofters Act. In 1895 I brought forward a Bill to extend the Crofters Act to certain counties in the north-east of Scotland, and the Government of the day accepted an Amendment to that effect in their Bill to amend the Crofters Act. Unfortunately, it was very strongly opposed. My hon. friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire has referred to the remarks of the present Leader of the House on that occasion. The right hon. Gentleman strongly opposed the extension of the Crofters Act to these counties, but he quite admitted the need of an improvement being made, and he spoke quite warmly on the subject. I therefore feel that we can appeal to him that if the Crofters Act is not extended we shall at any rate have the greatest possible benefit from the amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act, and that we may have a separate Act for Scotland. The matter can then be dealt with in such a way that Scotch public opinion will have due weight in modifying its provisions. Reference has been made to the good management of the Fife estates, a great many of which are in Banffshire It is quite true that the estate rules completely protect the tenants' improvements. The system of the Earls of Fife was to let crofters take up as much land as they liked at a very moderate rent, on the understanding that there would be no enhancement of rent, and that the landlord would give them no help in reference to their improvements; the tenants undertook to make the improvements, and the landlord undertook not to enhance the rent. It was a most satisfactory arrangement. The Earl of Fife who introduced the arrangement has been called the "Good Earl," and the people have prospered under the system. But now comes in the weak point of such an arrangement. As long as the land belonged to the Fife estate it was all right, but the present Duke of Fife is selling a good deal of the land, and the purchasers are in no way bound by these rules. There is nothing whatever to prevent the purchasers confiscating the improvements of the tenants and raising the rent to the full value of the holdings. It is necessary that the Act should contemplate a condition of things of that sort, but it is impossible to do so if it is coupled with the English Act. I live in Gloucestershire, and there could not be a

greater contrast than between the crofter of Banffshire and the small farmer of Gloucestershire, and the idea of the same law being suitable to both is absurd. With regard to the provisions of the present Bill, I regret that the right hon. Gentleman did not agree to the request that the consideration of the measure might be postponed in order to enable us to consult our constituents on the matter. But not long ago I took occasion to have a very thorough consultation with those of my constituents who are interested in land, and therefore am in possession of their general views on the subject, though not, of course, with regard to this particular measure. I ascertained what were the practical difficulties with which they had to deal, and the parts of the existing Act of which they approved, and the parts of which they disdisapproved. Very briefly, they approve of the principle of the Act of 1883. That Act laid down for the first time the excellent principle of the ownership of the tenant in his improvements. They also accept with satisfaction the test by which the valuation of those improvements is to be made—that is, the value of the improvements to the incoming tenants. But they object to all the cumbrous procedure in the Act which runs counter to the good principle therein laid down. The reservations, limitations, and restrictions are such that there are very few tenants who admit having received benefit from proceedings under the Act. A tenant should be free to go on with his work; he must not be continually looking round to see if he must give notice of this, or ask the permission of the landlord for that. All his energies and time from morning to night are needed if he is to make his farm pay. I cannot see why the excellent statement at the beginning of the schedule should not be made the definition of improvements which should govern the whole Act. These schedules would be very much simplified if there was a definition that an improvement included anything done by the tenant whereby the letting value of the holding was increased. The tenant, as a general rule, knows better than the landlord what is to the benefit of the land, and if he makes a mistake and puts up a building or makes a watercourse or a bit of road which is not of value to the holding, the arbitrator would exclude it, and very little other protection is required. To discourage a tenant from putting up buildings by requiring him to get the leave of the landlord is a very unfortunate procedure. Among the special needs of the people in our part of country are proper cottages for the farm labourers. The tendency at present is for sanitary inspectors to condemn the old houses as being unfit, according to modern sanitary ideas, for human habitation. They are then pulled down, but no other cottages are erected in their place. The farmer is the man who directly suffers from not having houses in which to put his farm labourers, and in the interests both of farming and of humanity he ought to be encouraged in every possible way to put up suitable cottages for the labourers. Another practical objection is with regard to the question of the sitting tenant. I do not at all agree with the view of the hon. Member opposite who said that this was an unreal grievance. There could not possibly be a more real grievance. The most practical agriculturist in the United Kingdom, Sir James Caird, says it is the fault of the Agricultural Holdings Act. The reason of it is very clear. At the end of a tenancy a good improving farmer finds himself in a dilemma: he does not want to pay an enhanced rent upon his own improvements, and he does not want to quit. Either course will be ruinous. The consequence is that outside unfair competition can be brought against him, and a man offers a rent which includes the improvements, sucks all the goodness out of the farm, and throws it back on the landlord. The reason we wish to extend to the sitting tenant the same benefits as are given to the quitting tenant is that we wish to put him on an equal footing with outsiders in competition for the next lease of the land. If he is given a lump sum equivalent to the value of his improvements, or an equivalent reduction of rent, he will be able to defy the outside competition of greedy and unscrupulous men. The interesting Report written by my hon. friend makes it perfectly clear what a dangerous class of men these speculators and wanderers are. To prevent such men ousting those whom Sir James Caird calls the backbone of the agricultural interest, it is absolutely necessary that the mischievous words "on quitting his tenancy" should be

omitted. The next important point is the question of contracting out. There were great complaints of that in the old Act, because it simply led to the evasion of the law and to withdrawing from the protection of the Act the very men for whom it was intended. The last point to which I will at present draw attention is the question of administration. Although the Act of 1883 laid down in broad terms how the value of the improvements was to be ascertained, in practice a very bad mechanical system has sprung up. Instead of ascertaining the value of the improvements to the incoming tenant, the valuers make a certain mechanical scale of manures, the time by which these were to be exhausted, and the precautions which were supposed to be taken. This method entirely misses the object of the first section of the Act, because it is very possible, and frequently happens, that the tenant might buy the wrong manure; he might put in a large quantity, a great deal of which would be unexhausted, but yet it would not be of any use at all. Therefore to give compensation in this mechanical way without looking to the results of the manures is contrary to the principle upon which the Act is founded. Good husbandry is at the bottom of the whole thing. That is the point to which the greatest importance is attached by all those farmers who are enthusiasts in their industry, who are really desirous of improving the land and of working it in an artistic way. What you want to know at the end of a man's tenancy is not how much of this or that manure he has put into the land, but whether he has cultivated the farm carefully, whether the land is clean, and so on. Every practical man can tell you a good deal in two minutes on that point. That should be made a leading point in the Bill. We want to encourage that in the interest not only of the tenant and of the landlord, but of the whole community. I think there is general agreement that the matter would be enormously simplified if a practical and scientific record were taken of the farm when a tenant enters and a similar record taken when he comes out. That would satisfy the man, and we should get rid of all the machinery of arbitrations and so forth. At present the rules very often work so as to give an advantage to the tenant who wishes to get the most out of the land, and act as a penalty upon the deserving citizen and friend of the people who tries to put as much as possible into the land.

*Mr. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) said that at the recent meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture, after an explanation of the provisions of the Bill, it was unanimously agreed to support the measure, and probably a similar result would have been arrived in the House of Commons if the President of the Board of Agriculture had explained several points which were evidently not clearly understood.

*Mr. CHANNING pointed out that the hon. Member was in error in stating that the Central Chamber of Agriculture unanimously supported the Bill. The Chambers unanimously adopted the report of the committee upon the Bill, a report which contained many suggestions of amendment.

*Mr. JASPER MORE thought that as well as the President of the Board of Agriculture being asked to go to Scotland, those interested in Scotland should attend the meetings of English farmers. If that had been done recently the speech of the late Solicitor General for Scotland would have been saved, because on that occasion Mr. Elliott explained that whereas a consolidating Bill was desirable, before it could be obtained it was necessary to pass this amended measure. It would be very interesting if the House could occasionally have a Return showing the extent to which different Bills passed by Parliament were really carried out. Such a Return would be specially interesting with respect to the Agricultural Holdings Acts. The House had been told by a Scotch Member that this Bill would certainly not be adopted in Scotland, while English Members frequently said that landowners had such excellent agreements that they would not require this Bill. It therefore appeared that the House was discussing an academic measure, and one which would not be generally carried out. Farmers in his part of the country had had a good deal of experience in this question, and the conclusion they had arrived at was that the most important thing was to have good arbitrators. In his country there was a gentleman of the greatest experience who, when difficult questions arose, invariably gave satisfac-

tion to both landlord and tenant. But the Chamber of Agriculture said there was a deficiency of these valuers. Where then were the arbitrators to come from? Perhaps the President of the Board of Agriculture would say whether members of the Institute of Surveyors would be sent down for the purpose, and, if so, as one of the objects of the Bill was to lessen expense, what the expense would be.

*MR. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): The hon. Member who has last addressed the House seemed to imagine that the Central Chamber of Agriculture, after the explanation which had been given by the Permament Secretary to the Board of Agriculture with reference to this Bill, had stamped it with the hall-mark of their unanimous approval. The hon. Member for East Northamptonshire put the hon. Gentleman right in that matter, but I think the real facts of the case are hardly yet understood by the House. The debate on this question took place on the report of a committee of the Central Chamber, and that report, after the explanation offered by Mr. Elliott, was, I believe, unanimously adopted, but that adoption was not by any means a complete and absolute approval of this Bill. The Bill was approved to a certain extent, because no one would be sorry to see it pass, but several omissions from it were noticed. Let me quote to the House a few of the remarks in the report which do not show that unanimous and complete approval suggested by the hon. Member. The report states—

"The committee are of opinion that a clear and simple Act consolidating the retained portions of the old Acts with the provisions of the amending Bill would be of great service to tenant farmers."

The Central Chamber of Agriculture is not a very reactionary body, and no doubt represents very largely the agricultural interest, perhaps even more the landlord than the tenant interest, for I certainly never remember a tenant farmer being president of the Chamber since I had the honour of being a Member of this House or of the Central Chamber. Then the report continues—

"The committee regret that the Bill gives the power of contracting out of the rules of procedure relating to arbitration."

The committee thought that those rules ought to be binding on everyone, and ought not to be subject to other agreements being made. As a matter of fact, it is the weaker tenant who always has to make that class of agreement; the strong man in all probability will choose the Act, and if not he will be able to make an agreement which probably represents his views better than the Act. But an enormous number of agreements are entered into which one side understands and the other does not, and we should be most careful that the procedure with reference to arbitration in this Bill should be universal. The report continues—

"Your committee desire to point out that in several very important respects the Bill fails to carry out the recommendation of 1894. These were adopted by the Council as a fair compromise between the land-owning and the land-occupying interests, and it will be necessary that the Bill should be amended in these particulars if it is to satisfy the requirements of the agricultural community."

I dare say that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Thirsk imagines that although he is entitled to make a speech on the Second Reading, everyone else ought to hold his tongue. As a matter of fact, a great many of the objections of the Central Chamber are objections of very great substance, and I must say that the form of the Bill, which is not a consolidating Bill, but a Bill by way of cross reference, is a very good subject for discussion in this House, because if this Bill were to be made into a consolidating Bill in the Committee upstairs, I venture to think the amount of Amendments that would be required would be enormous. Then the committee considered that the laying down of permanent pasture should be transferred from Part 1 to Part 2, so that notice should be sufficient instead of permission. In view of the changed conditions of agriculture during the last twenty years, and the constantly increasing practice of converting arable land into pasture, it was considered by the committee essential that compensation for the unexhausted value of this improvement should be secured to the tenant. With regard to two years and older seeds and the increased fertility of a holding due to continuous good farming, the hon. Member for Basingstoke seems to think that a record of the holding should be kept, and that it would be a very expensive matter. As a matter of fact, in the debate of 1894 of the modest recommendations I ventured to make, the one that got unanimous

approval, as far as I remember, was that which suggested a report of the holding. You cannot fairly assess the difference in value between the condition of a farm when a tenant goes out and its condition when he came in without such a report, and it is pertinent to note, of course, that as regards increased fertility due to improvements good farming makes a report is absolutely unnecessary. There is a very important point in the Bill in which the Central Chamber of Agriculture agrees with everyone else except the Government. The Central Chamber does not understand, and neither, as far as I know, does anyone understand, why these claims of landlord and tenant should be put in three months after the termination of the tenancy. The Council suggest, we suggest, hon. Gentlemen opposite suggest, and everybody, as far as I understand, suggests except the Government, that time should be given two or three years before the determination of the tenancy. There seems to be some doubt as to what could possibly be the object of this three months proposal. The statement of the Permanent Secretary to the Board of Agriculture at the meeting of the Central Chamber led people to suppose that the idea was that this notice should correspond as nearly as possible with what would probably occur if the tenancy had been determined under an agreement. If so, all I can say is that it is one more evidence of the desire of the Government to frame this Bill so as to induce people to enter into agreements instead of coming under it. If it is a bad Bill possibly they might do better by agreements, but if it is a good Bill it is very unlikely they will do better. If the conditions of the tenancy are fair, and are understood by both parties, landlords and tenants, who have been through the mill, will know what it means. We all want the land cultivated as well as it can possibly be cultivated, and we are all anxious that our legislation should be such as to afford the greatest possible assistance to agriculturists, both landlords and tenants. That being so, I think this House, with the advice of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, is perfectly capable of drawing up a fair and reasonable Bill as between the parties, and I think it is a very great mistake to leave to a weak and erring individual the chance of entering into an agreement against his own interests. In the report of the committee of the Central Chamber it is also stated that—

"They regret that effect has not been given to the recommendation of 1894, as to a report of the condition of the holding. They also regret the absence of a schedule of landlord's fixtures, as recommended in 1894."

They further considered that the limit which is four years in the Act of 1894 should be reduced to two years, and that the abolition of the same limit was very undesirable. The committee also considered that the following words in Section 6 of the Act of 1894 should be inserted as part of Section 1—

"Except as far as the proper return of manure to the holding has been made in respect of such produce so sold off or removed therefrom."

I have quoted from the report to show how inaccurate was the idea which was conveyed by the hon. Gentleman with reference to the Central Chamber of Commerce, and anyone who was not aware of the proceedings and had heard the hon. Gentleman's speech would have gone away with the idea that this Bill had really been approved in its main elements by the Central Chamber, whereas it will be seen from the quotations I have read that the Bill is taken for what it is worth, and that very serious defects were pointed out. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Hexham Division, who made a most admirable speech, as all who heard it will agree, and who made us regret that he is not heard oftener in debates in this House, referred to the Bill as a small amending Bill. He himself went through a large number of particulars in which the Bill could have been extended and improved with advantage, and I am bound to say that he made us feel almost inclined to embrace him—although that would not be quite Parliamentary—when he said that he wished that the President of the Board of Agriculture had seen his way to include in this Bill sitting as well as quitting tenants. The reasons he gave were not perhaps the reasons I would have used, but the conclusion he came to was so acceptable that I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to accept the suggestion of his hon. friend. He seemed to think that the landlords were in need of protection as regards the abolition of penal clauses. I do not myself believe in the value which is attached to these clauses, and I very much doubt if they

could be enforced in law; but if there is nothing in the point made by the hon. Gentleman, I hope that he and hon. Gentlemen opposite will not think we are against them. We are not in the least in favour of the tenant who spoils the farm. He is one of the greatest enemies to agriculture and to his country, while the man who benefits a farm and makes it produce more than it has previously produced is a benefactor. If the hon. Member makes good the point that the penal clauses may lead to the breaking up of old pasture land, then if the present condition of the Bill is not sufficient to make the position of the landlord secure and to make it pretty certain that farms are not to be deteriorated in value, speaking for myself, I am convinced that if that can be shown the hon. Member will not stand alone in proposing an Amendment making it an impossibility. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Abingdon Division of Berkshire congratulated the Government very much, and so did the hon. Member for the Horsham Division. The hon. Member for the Abingdon Division said that the Bill of the Government carried out eleven of the thirteen points that were proposed by the Royal Commission, and the hon. Member for the Horsham Division congratulated the Government very much on such a simple way out of their difficulties. I congratulate them too. In this debate the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire taunted in a courteous way the right hon. Gentleman with reference to previous Amendments moved in this House when the party now in power were in opposition. During those three hotly contested years there were, we know, diverse Amendments moved on behalf of distressed agriculturists; most fervid and moving speeches were made, and some of the most terrible pictures of the ruin of agriculture were drawn, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was never more eloquent than during those debates. The condition of agriculture was described in most terrible colours, and yet we find from the right hon. Gentleman's interruption that all he meant when he gave his vote and occasionally made a speech during those years was that the agricultural interest was terribly in need, was, in fact, dying for want of the Agricultural Rating Act, or—as the right hon. Gentleman put it—financial relief. This Government has been four years in office, they have had plenty of money, and we assume that they have been endeavouring to do their duty. If they thought the agricultural interest was entitled to more money, they ought to have given it. Therefore we are fully entitled to assume that they regard the reduction of the rates by one half as the proper measure of financial relief required by this terribly harassed industry. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke and voted on these various occasions he did not, as I understand, intend to convey that the Agricultural Holdings Act stood particularly in need of amendment, but whatever he thought about it he obviously considers that sufficient improvement is afforded by the Bill now before us, and so from both points of view—financial as well as cultivating—we have redressed the whole of the agricultural grievances of Great Britain. I think hon. Gentlemen opposite are fully entitled to congratulate the Government on such a solution. It has been extremely cheap. I came from Norfolk this morning with a gentleman who is a farmer on a very large scale. I understood from him that the value of the Agricultural Rating Act to him was £7 10s. per annum, and he was afraid that on the renewal of his lease next year he would not get that amount any longer, but that his landlord would. As regards this particular Bill he will no doubt have the advantage of being able to plant an acre of osiers or an acre of raspberries without having to get the written leave of his landlord, and if at the end of his lease he has a dispute with his landlord he may have the advantage of arbitration under the provisions of this Bill. I do not say that he was not glad to have the £7 10s., or that he would not be glad to have a single arbitrator instead of three. But if agriculture is in the distressed condition we are told it is, it cannot be said to be entirely relieved by those two measures, or else its condition must have been very much exaggerated. The truth is that it was exaggerated, and exaggerated, I believe, for the purposes of discussion in this House, although, of course, quite unintentionally. The Central Chamber of Agriculture is not a mere Socialistic or Radical body. It is anything but that; it is highly respectable. [Cheers.] Yes, I thought that would appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I

am delighted to be able to afford them the satisfaction. The Royal Commission considered this whole question, and made a series of recommendations, some of which have, of course, been carried out, though not eleven out of thirteen. The Majority Report of the Commission has had, as I dare say it ought to have had, more effect with the Government than the Central Chamber of Agriculture, but the Majority Report of the Commission was the irreducible minimum of the Central Chamber of Agriculture. After having adopted the Report in 1894, the Central Chamber proceeded in November of that year to reconsider the matter, and they decided in favour of two additions, although they did not pass them by a sufficient majority to have them included among the recommendations to be officially submitted to the Government. They go a long way beyond this Bill, and are very much nearer what the Central Chamber want. They are compensation for disturbance and compensation for the sitting tenant. Instead of that we have got a small amending Bill and a Bill by reference. The hon. Member for the Horsham Division gave some excellent advice to the Government, and I sincerely hope that if the Government have an opportunity of putting a few agricultural Members on the Grand Committee to which this Bill will be sent, they will not forget the claims of the hon. Member who made such a well-considered and excellent speech. I can only say—although, of course, we are prepared to accept any crumb of comfort and any improvement in the law that we can secure—our feeling is that we ought to have every opportunity of improving both the quality and the quantity of this Bill, and I believe that a considerable number of Amendments which will be moved by hon. Members on this side will have the support of hon. Members on the other side of the House. I sincerely trust that in the course of these debates the Government will learn not only from this side but from their own, that this Bill must be considerably extended before it is passed into law.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I do not rise for the purpose of offering any opposition to this Bill or of making any detailed criticism upon its provisions. So far as I am able to judge, I take it as a distinct advance, and cannot help thinking that some of the observations made by the preceding speakers show that they must have misunderstood the operation of, at any rate, one of its sections. The difficulty in which, under the Act of 1883, a tenant is placed by the requirement of two months notice has more than once been pointed out in this Parliament. As I read this Bill, Sub-section 2 of Clause 2 is intended to relieve the tenant from the obligation of giving notice of claim two months at least before the end of the tenancy, and that is, I believe, a beneficial provision. With regard to the amendment of the machinery provided by the Act of 1883, I only desire to say, what I have said more than once, that it is really far better not to invent any special machinery. It is better to give a county court jurisdiction in matters of this kind. The Miners Act of 1889, which hon. Members acknowledge is a good one, allows a reference of disputes to the arbitration of an umpire. Our recent experience of the Workmen's Compensation Act absolutely supports the view I have taken in regard to special machinery. I wish to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the people of the Welsh counties are profoundly disappointed with the provisions of this measure. Rightly or wrongly, people belonging to both the landlord and tenant classes in Wales have understood the repeated references in the Queen's Speeches to a measure for amending the relations between landlord and tenant, the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman himself, and speeches made by his supporters in the country, as a pledge in regard to Wales and Monmouthshire, that we should have some special legislation which would solve the problem of the conflicting interests of landlord and tenant in that part of the country. A Royal Commission was appointed in 1893 to consider the conditions on which land is held and cultivated in Wales and Monmouthshire. I had the honour of being a member of that Commission. We sat in every county of the Principality and in Monmouthshire, and as a result two different sets of recommendations were made. The first set, which was in the Majority Report, were agreed to by six members of that Commission. In effect they amounted to a recommendation for the creation of a modified land court system. It was not the land system of the Irish Act of 1881, which involves a

dual ownership; nor quite like the crofters system in Scotland. We, as we thought, hit upon a measure which would secure the proper and equitable adjustment of the rights of landlord and tenant without in the least tending to break up estates or damage landlords' interests, if they would approach the subject in a fair manner. I frankly state that after what the right hon. Gentleman has said we cannot expect him to introduce a measure which would embrace our proposal. Nothing that he has said, however, is inconsistent with the view that we thought the Government would introduce a Bill in respect to Wales and Monmouthshire which would carry out the unanimous recommendation of that Royal Commission in a Report which was signed by Lord Kenyon and the hon. Baronet the Member for Swansea (Town), who are supporters of the Government. The Commission unanimously said that the circumstances in Wales were such as to demand separate treatment by a separate Bill. In their Report they say that while they had no right to pronounce on the question of the amendment of the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883, and of the law of landlord and tenant as to agricultural holdings in England and Wales, without prejudice to that question, they thought the circumstances disclosed in regard to Wales during the inquiry urgently called for legislation such as they had sketched, and that they would be disposed to deal with Wales in a separate Bill, however desirable it might be, as a general rule, to avoid separate legislation. It has been thought that the Commission had some idea about Home Rule for Wales. That was not in the mind certainly of Lord Kenyon, and certainly was not in my own mind. What we had in mind was that there are certain topics of legislation and certain heads of jurisprudence which it is desirable to compress into one general statute for the whole United Kingdom, such as marriage, bankruptcy, bills of exchange, marine insurance, and matters of that kind. But that is not the case with regard to land tenure. Land tenure is essentially a topic which ought to be considered with reference to the historical and economic circumstances of the areas with which you are dealing, and it was so considered and dealt with in the Act of 1883. But what the Government is doing by this Bill is to endeavour to compress into one set of formulæ recommendations as between landlord and tenant for the whole of Great Britain. I think that is an objectionable principle. It has been urged that a good case has been made out for the separate treatment of Scotland; but I think, if I had time, I could make out an even stronger case for Wales. We have had more than once in this Parliament an opportunity of speaking on this topic; and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to take note of the sentence in the Report to which I have referred, because there is not the slightest doubt that the existing law acts rather unjustly. What are the points in the Act of 1883 proposed to be amended by this Bill? The first point is, that in the actual operation of the law at the present moment, there is an injustice wherever a re-valuation of an estate takes place. When a re-valuation is made, a formal notice to quit is given to the tenant. Now, if the tenant were really going away he would be able to give, under the Act of 1883, a notice of claim for compensation in respect of any improvements; but if he does not want to leave his farm, and puts in a claim for compensation, the formal notice would be acted upon. A second point was made by the hon. Member as to the difficulty in which a tenant finds himself when an estate is sold. The first thing the solicitor of the new owner does is to give notice to every tenant to quit, and a large number of the promises made by the agent of the anterior owner are given the go-by to, and the tenant finds himself face to face, not only with a new owner, but a new agent, who has not the slightest idea of the notions of Welsh farmers. This Bill is a good Bill so far as it goes, but is no redemption of the promises given to the farmers of the country by the Government. The Government and their supporters deliberately led the farmers of Wales to believe they were going to bring in a big measure that would do them something like justice. I do not say they led them to believe that they were going to give them land courts, but they have encouraged the farmers to believe that they would deal thoroughly with this subject. That is what is not done by this Bill. I would not oppose the measure; but I cannot allow the Second Reading to be taken without making an emphatic protest against the action which the Government has adopted.

first instance on precedent. It is always resting to me to find that hon Gentlemen who declare themselves in favour of reforms or new measures, and that precedent supports them, are short of sound argument. There is no precedent at all in favour of separate legislation for England and Scotland. The hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire contested the right of the Board of Agriculture to represent Scottish interests. Whether that right should be contested or not, it undoubtedly exists. If hon. Gentlemen opposite really have the interests of agriculture at heart and really desire that the Minister who represents the agricultural interest should play anything like an important part in the work of the Government, they are doing that which is best calculated to make it impossible. If they break up the Board of Agriculture into three or four small boards, each representing a different part of the country, and obliged to strive for agriculture against other demands for legislation, and to strive for their own little part of agriculture against their colleagues in agriculture, nothing could be more calculated to injure the agricultural interest or to paralyse the hands of the representatives of the agricultural interest. I cannot conceive why Scotch agricultural business should be done in Scotland rather than in England.

MR. BUCHANAN: We have always done it hitherto.

*MR. LONG: Not since the Board of Agriculture was appointed. An hon. Member has spoken with considerable contempt and derision of the meetings that take place annually in Scotland between representatives of Scottish agricultural societies and the President of the Board of Agriculture and his expert advisers. The description which he gave of them was the last description that anybody who knew anything about them would give. I do not hesitate to say that the annual conferences which have taken place between the representatives of Scottish agriculture and the Minister for Agriculture have been of the greatest possible assistance to my advisers on the Board of Agriculture and to myself. However that may be, I do not hesitate to say that these conferences are serious and practical ones, and have been of the greatest possible assistance to my advisers on the Board of Agriculture and to myself. Year by year the agenda paper and the discussion have proved that the Minister and his advisers and the representatives of these various agricultural districts in Scotland have been brought into closer touch, gained better and more experience of the work upon which each of us is engaged, and we are better able to understand and appreciate each other after these conferences than before. I am able, therefore, to claim that the business is of a practical character, and has been a great benefit to the Department in London and to agriculture. All that has been said by hon. Gentlemen opposite on behalf of Scotland could be urged with equal force in regard to Northumberland, Cumberland, or Durham. [Opposition cries of "No!"] Certainly. The claim made for Scotland rests upon a difference in the laws and a difference in the agricultural customs. In regard to agricultural customs and practices, there is as great difference between the customs of the north of England and the south, and between the east of England and the west, as there is between agricultural practice in Scotland and agricultural practice in England. With regard to the law the only ground for the proposals of hon. Members opposite is that in one place a man is called a labourer, in another is called a hind, and somewhere else a ploughman. In one case there is one description for a court of law, and in another case another description. In Scotland the word "deterioration" is used, and in England the word "waste." The differences are so few, and the distinctions are so small, that no practical difficulty could exist in applying one Act to both countries, and great conveniences must necessarily result from legislating by one Bill rather than by two. If the motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite is to be adopted, and the House were to decide that this Bill should not be read a second time, but that it should be divided into two parts, the result would be that it would be practically impossible to proceed further with this question this session, at all events. We are asked to bring in two Bills, upon which all the questions we have listened to—sitting tenant, permanent pasture, schedule of landlord's claims—every question that has been raised to-night would be discussed twice over, simply because one word is used in

Scotland and another word in England. Lord Justice Vaughan Williams has said that the Scotch Act, except that it substitutes "sheriff" for "county court judge," and Scotch law terms for English law terms, is couched in the very words of the English Act. Speaking generally, a comparison justified that statement, and the evidence of a High Court Judge on that point is at least as worthy of credence as the statement of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is an English Judge.

*MR. LONG: But even an English Judge may be acquainted with the law.

AN HON. MEMBER: English law.

*MR. LONG: And Scotch law. Hon. Members opposite not only claim for themselves that they have a language, a country, and a law of their own, but apparently also that no one who is not a Scotchman can understand either one or the other. One thing which shows the poverty of the Scotch case in this matter is the way in which the hon. Member for Hawick fell back on the old arguments. We all know that in the House of Commons, when a hon. Member has no case, and is beggared for argument, he finds fault with the draughtsmanship of the Bill. All do it, and I have done it myself. The trick is too old even to escape the notice of the greatest tyro of Parliamentary warfare. The hon. Member for the Border Burghs waxed very eloquent over the draughtsmanship of this Bill, and said it was the worst he had ever seen. I am not sure that he did not compare me or the draughtsman, or both, with a sheep's head. His experience cannot be very great. Hon. Members opposite have fallen foul of legislation by reference. That is an old, hackneyed, and threadbare argument, only to be used when all else has failed. We are following precedent. We are amending the law first, and we hope to consolidate the law afterwards. At a later date, if I am in the position to do so, I hope to consolidate the Acts relating to agricultural holdings, and even the outraged feelings of hon. Gentlemen who represent Scottish constituencies will then be soothed, because they will find that they will be able to so arrange the various clauses as to bring the Scotch part close together, and perhaps to get rid of these references to Scotch Acts, which are so distasteful to Scottish Members. The fact that there are small differences in the legal terms of the two countries does not constitute a plea for the statements made by hon. Gentlemen opposite that we ought to have brought in two Bills. The policy advocated by hon. Gentlemen opposite would result in the postponement to a distant time of a Bill dealing with agricultural holdings in both countries, whereas the policy adopted by the Government will enable us to pass in one session a Bill which will remove many, at all events, of the difficulties which have been proved to exist. I will just say a few words about the other criticisms which have been passed on the Bill. Great fault has been found with the Government because we do not include in Part 2 of the first schedule the right of the tenant farmer to lay down permanent pasture for himself. I have heard that objection raised in many quarters, but I believe it is a suggestion which, although attractive at first sight, will not bear examination in the light of practical experience. The laying down of permanent pasture is one of the most delicate of agricultural operations. You may take the greatest care and spend a great deal of money, and yet in the end it may turn out that the land was altogether unsuitable for the purpose. In this case it is the incoming tenant whose interest the House must guard. The soil and the seed may be selected with the utmost care, and the land laid down under the supervision of the most skilful man; but it frequently happens that while for two or even three years it shows a splendid growth, it then begins to steady down, and in six years the weeds choke the grass and the land proves to be altogether unsuitable for the crop. It is said that in that case the quitting tenant gets nothing. But what is the position of the incoming tenant who comes in at the end of the two years? He has to take the improvement, which has every appearance of vitality and profit attached to it, but he has hardly got into his farm before he sees the pasture wither up. I do not believe it can be shown that landlords have prevented their tenants from laying down land to permanent pasture, if they have to do so, and I am bound to say that I think enough land has been laid

*V. Long.

down to grass. Great fault has been found on both sides of the House with regard to the three months limit, within which claims may be made. I cannot help thinking that there must be some misunderstanding on that point. The Government has no affection for this three months limit, and if in Committee there is a general expression of opinion that some change should be made the Government will be quite willing to consider any such suggestion. Under custom and under agreement, not only is there generally speaking no notice, but there is no limitation whatever as to the time, after the expiration of the tenancy, within which the claim must be made. I suppose that for every settlement between landlord and tenant that takes place in this country under the Agricultural Holdings Act there are fifty, or even a hundred, which have been made under custom or agreement. It may be asked why, then, have we put three months into the Bill. That I will explain. Under custom and by agreement landlord and tenant are governed by conditions to which both have been a party. But here we are giving to tenants certain statutory rights, which enable them to claim compensation, and we are casting upon landlords certain statutory obligations. The Government thought it would be only fair, therefore, in regard to these statutory obligations, that there should be a limit of time within which claims for compensation should be made. The various suggestions which have been made with reference to the period in the Bill will be carefully considered by the Government. The hon. Member for South Molton has referred to the fact that tenants' claims are strictly scheduled, but that landlords' claims are not scheduled. In answer to that I would say that I will answer the hon. Gentleman's objections by an authority which I think he will readily accept—namely, that of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, who, in a separate Report, stated that the common law rights of the landlord could not be got rid of, and added—

"I am disposed to think that the suggestion of the landlord's schedule is of little practical value, and that it might even lead to an ingenious expansion of the landlord's claims."

That, I think, answers the comments of the hon. Member for South Molton. We are giving the tenant new rights; we are giving the landlord no new rights, and I think it is only fair and reasonable that those rights should be scheduled so that Parliament should know what it is giving to the tenants. Reference has been made to the sitting tenant question. The question of giving compensation to the tenant while he remains in occupation of his holding may or may not be a just one, but it is practically inconsistent with the principles upon which the Agricultural Holdings Acts have hitherto rested. It is inconsistent with the principle which is at the foundation of this Bill, and, that being so, it would have been impossible for us to deal with the suggestions made in the unanimous report of the Welsh Commission in this respect. There is another point referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Swansea which, I confess, at first sight attracted me very much. That is the difficulty that arises in certain cases when a property is put up for sale, or when a change takes place either in the ownership or management. It is one of those peculiar agricultural problems which are more likely to solve themselves effectually to the permanent advantage of landlord and tenant by the free expression of public opinion, and the pressure of public opinion as expressed in the House of Commons. It is one of those things where we must rely upon personal feeling rather than legislation. My hon. friend the Member for Horsham referred to penal rents. I cannot help feeling that some who have referred to that subject indulged rather freely in their criticisms, and that under the circumstances they were a little vicious occasionally. I could not help wishing that they were called upon to draft a Bill, in which case I might be able to find as many faults in their Bill as they find in mine. Recently a paper in Scotland which does not generally support the views of those who sit on this side of the House and some other critics have been examining our Bill, and the Bill brought forward by the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire. I am content with my case, even at the hands of the most unfriendly critics on the other side. Though they do not like my Bill very much, if they had to choose between the two they would prefer mine. At all events that enables me to bear with composure the criticisms they have passed upon it. Penal rents is another of those subjects it is difficult to deal with. If penal rent had only been

used by the owners of the land for the purpose originally and properly intended we should have heard no objection to it at all. But unfortunately there are black sheep in every flock, and no doubt penal rents have been exacted which were of a most arbitrary and unjust character. With regard to the point raised by my hon. friend —namely, if there is any risk of permanent pasture being broken up haphazard by the tenant—there is no doubt that some Amendment will have to be introduced to remedy that, because it would be the greatest possible injury to agriculture generally. Therefore, if the abolition of penal rents is liable to be as dangerous as my hon. friend suggests, I will make it my business to bring in an Amendment upstairs. It has been suggested that two years seeds should be included. Our reason for not putting that in the Bill was that we believed that the occupier's position was rather better now than if this was included in the Bill. I think the suggestion is a very valuable one, and if a proposal of that kind is made upstairs it is one to which I will give very favourable consideration, and I will do it because it is a step in the right direction. We wish to do everything we reasonably can to enable the occupier to cultivate his farm to the best of his ability, and to give security that fair and reasonable compensation will be paid to him for the money he has spent. We seek to do nothing in this Bill which would depart from the sound principle of giving the tenant compensation for that which he has justly and properly done, and to prevent him, to his own ruin and the ruin of the landlord and the land, from embarking upon unsound experiments, because he believed that whether he succeeded or failed he would be able to fall back on the landlord for compensation. I think anything that would produce that conviction in the mind of the farmer would do ten times more harm than good. Believing that these are the principles which should affect agricultural compensation, we have asked the House to read this Bill a second time, and we hope and believe that with such Amendments as may be necessary it will prove a desirable and a useful measure.

MR. URE (Linlithgowshire): In moving the Amendment that stands in my name I desire to disclaim altogether any act of hostility to the Bill. My Amendment is not a patriotic outcry, and my right hon. friend may feel assured that there is substance in it, and, I hope, a businesslike aim. The right hon. Gentleman has taunted us with being over-sensitive on the question of precedent. I at all events am not over-sensitive on the subject. What I do say is that the onus lies upon the Government of proving that Scotland should have separate treatment, because undoubtedly up to the present time legislation with regard to the land laws of Scotland at all events has always proceeded by way of separate Bills, and when the Government depart, as in the present instance, from that custom, it is for them to show cause and to justify the course they have taken. It is no use appealing, as the right hon. Gentleman did, to legislation dealing with the sale of goods, or private rights, or bills of exchange. The right hon. Gentleman claimed precedent in support of this legislation, and offered to support that statement to the House, but he has not supported his statement. He has not pointed out a single statute in which questions connected with Scotch land laws have ever been dealt with in an English Bill. This is, so far as I am aware, the very first occasion in which the attempt has ever been made, and I hope to be able to show that it is a most luckless attempt. Our system of land laws is different, our system of landlord and tenant is different, and our climate is different. There is a wide general difference between the soil and climate of Scotland and the soil and climate of England. Our methods of cultivation are different, and, as the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate knows, our system of deciding disputes by arbitration is in many respects different from that in England. The evidence given before the Agricultural Commission by Scotch witnesses has been placed in a separate category, and in every summary of the evidence the Scotch evidence is placed in a separate and distinct chapter. All these considerations seem to point in the direction of separate treatment, and there lies on the Government the burden of showing why we should depart from that course in the present instance. We have no desire whatever to change our system, and to alter the law of landlord and tenant, or, at all events, if we have a desire to change, we prefer to develop on our own lines rather

subject for England and for Scotland in one and the same measure' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed be left out stand part of the Question."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): As my right hon. friend particularly claimed to speak as a layman and not as a lawyer, and as a great deal of reference has been made to the legal portion of this Bill with a view to showing that it would introduce immense confusion with regard to Scotland, perhaps it is as well I should say a few words. An appeal has been made to precedent, and the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire seemed to deprecate the idea that the Board of Agriculture should in this matter be the ruling authority, and we had an echo of that in the speech to which we have just listened. But it seems to have been forgotten, so far as precedent is concerned, that the Bills we are amending were passed in 1883, whereas the Board of Agriculture was not constituted until 1889, and that that Board was constituted, as the title of the Act shows, as a Board of Agriculture for Great Britain. That may have been right or it may have been wrong, but at any rate it was done, and the hon. Member can scarcely expect that we should graft upon this Bill the creation of a new Department. As there is an existing Department, it would be little less than absurd to give the charge of agricultural measures to the Scotch Office instead of to my right hon. friend, with all the expert advice which he has at his command. The hon. Member for Linlithgow said he knew of no case in which Scotch land rights had been dealt with in the same Bill as English. "Land rights" is a rather large term. If he meant land tenure in the sense of having to do with conveyancing and the actual title of land, that no doubt is always dealt with by a separate Bill, because the two systems are quite different. But if he means questions such as the present, where such technicalities are absent, I cannot give him a better instance than the Succession Duty Act and the Finance Act. There you have to deal with very difficult questions indeed. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members who say "Oh!" do not know the facts as well as I do. If they had to advise on them about twice a week, as I do, they would know that there were very difficult questions connected with land tenure in those Acts, and that if there was a case under which a claim might be made for separate treatment because of Scotch nomenclature, it would be those Acts. The Succession Duty Act was passed in 1852, but we have gone on comfortably ever since. Although it is perfectly true that land tenure in Scotland and in England, in the proper sense of the term, is different, yet for the practical purposes of this Bill it is precisely the same in both cases. I do not mean to say that you cannot find minute differences in the law of landlord and tenant in the two countries, but they are really the same. The practice in Scotland and the practice in England have no doubt been very different in one sense, that in old days the rule in Scotland was to have nineteen years leases, whereas in England the practice was to have year to year tenancies. But what does that matter in a Bill which makes no distinction between long and short tenancies? The compensation for improvements is treated in this Bill irrespective of the length of a particular tenancy. So much for the merits. Now let me come to the form. We have heard a speech which certainly was meant to trade on a feeling on which probably it is always safe to trade—namely, the patriotism of hon. Members. To listen to the speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite one would have supposed that this Bill was packed with phrases of high English which poor unfortunate Scotchmen could not understand. But while Englishmen may not always be able to understand Scotch, I think Scotchmen can always understand English. If this Bill is read through, it will be found that with the single exception of "distress" which is in a Section which does not apply to Scotland, there is not a single term of art. Every term used is a term of ordinary English, with the possible exception which the hon. Member for the Hawick Burghs flourished, namely, "cesser." It is quite arguable that "cesser" is ordinary English, but at any rate to talk about the difficulties a Scotch Judge would have in making out the meaning of "cesser" is pure affectation. On referring to the Reports I find that not only has the effect of the word "cesser" been discussed, but it is actually a catchword in the Index to

the Scotch Reports. Therefore if the Judges did not understand the meaning of "cesser" they would be very far from fit for their duties. The argument used by the hon. Member for Linlithgow was not an argument on the question of whether there should be a separate Scotch Bill, but on the question of consolidation *versus* amendment. I challenge anybody to go through the Bill and find a single term of art in it, and I look upon this idea of ultra-Scotch patriotism as perfectly ridiculous.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I am glad to be able to support the contention raised by my hon. friend the Member for Linlithgow. Apart altogether from precedent—and the Lord Advocate has not attempted to argue that precedent is not on our side—let me point out the practical hardship under which we must labour even if this Bill is not discussed in Committee of the whole House. Whenever a Scotch Bill is sent to a Committee upstairs it is the practice that Scotch Members should be added to the Committee in larger proportion than in the case of an English Bill. This is a Bill which affects both England and Scotland, and therefore we cannot in fairness to the English interests in the matter claim, in any way, a preponderating Scotch representation on the Committee. Everyone knows there are differences between Scotch and English matters, especially in regard to land tenure. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture said he stood before the House as the advocate of the agricultural interests. If I may be allowed to say so, that is not at all his primary position in this House in proposing this Bill. He is the advocate of Her Majesty's Government and of the policy of that Government which has led up to the introduction of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman said this Bill was ready four years ago. If that was the case, we complain that it was not presented four years ago. I was endeavouring to show that the fact of Scotland being grouped with England in this Bill has led to Scotch interests being sacrificed. As a matter of fact, legislation and administration go together, and what we have suffered from in Scotland is the fact that subjects in which we have a deep and substantial interest have been delayed because it has not been possible for Governments to bring forward legislation to deal with them. The real reason we are not allowed to have separate Bills for Scotland is that the Government will not give the time of Parliament to the matter. The right hon. Gentleman will have to hold his annual meeting at Edinburgh for a good many more years before he gets thoroughly into touch with Scotch opinion. All the arguments which have been laid before the House in the endeavour to controvert the proposition of my hon. friend would apply with equal cogency to Ireland. But in Ireland there is a separate department, a separate organisation——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The only question before the House is whether Parliament should legislate on this subject for England and Scotland by one Bill or by two.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I was simply showing that the arguments applicable in this case to Scotland are just as applicable in principle to the case of Ireland. I do not wish to go beyond your ruling, and if I do so it is purely by accident, but I do feel strongly that the agricultural interests of Scotland are sacrificed by the procedure of the Government in regard to this question. In Ireland there has been a very great revival of agriculture, which would have been impossible if Irish interests had not been specially regarded. No one can deny that during the last five years the progress made in Ireland with regard to agriculture has been greater than in any other part of the three kingdoms. I am not content with the position of Scotland at the present time. The foundation for any further progress must be a strong local interest, but it is entirely contrary to that spirit of local interest to adopt the attitude which the Government have adopted in this present Bill. We have in Scotland the same difficulties as are complained of in other parts of the kingdom. We have men wanting land who cannot get land, and we have the same difficulties as to the concentration of population. All this can be combated only by the endeavour to stimulate local interest in agriculture according to local customs and local habits. It is not only on the legal arguments which have been put forward by my hon. friend, but because I believe that underlying those legal arguments are the foundations of a revival of agri-

culture in Scotland as strong and as useful as the revival of agriculture in Ireland, that I support the motion which has been submitted to the House.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 115; Noes, 30. (Division List No. 100.

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arroll, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stan. W.
Cotton-Jordrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. Manc'r
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon.)
Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goschen, Rt Hn G J (St. George's
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Houston, R. P.
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Long, Rt Hon Walter (Liverpool
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Col. (Lancashire)
Milward, Col. Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J (Coventry)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Reckitt, Harold James
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt-Col A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell- (Birm
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wyndham, George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Cork, N.E.)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Doogan, P. C.
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
M'Dermott, Patrick
Maddison, Fred.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Price, Robert John
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighsh.
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Ure, Alexander
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Causton and Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Mr. Long.*)

*MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I object to this Bill being referred to the Grand Committee on Trade. Scotland has, proportionately, larger agricultural interests than England has. In the ordinary case of referring Scotch Bills to Grand Committees, matters are so arranged that, whilst retaining the balance

of parties, a preponderating number of Scotch Members are added to, or form the actual attendance of, the Committee. In the present case, as the Bill equally applies to England, the English Members will desire their full representation, leaving only one-eleventh for Scotland to be divided between the two sides of the House, allowing only three for the Opposition, a totally inadequate representation for what is the most important Bill of the Session relating to Scotland. It is bad enough to be out-voted by English Members on purely Scotch Bills, but worse to be deprived of all opportunity of discussing an important Scotch Bill in Committee. Step by step Scotland is being deprived of her representative institutions. Only the other day Scotch Members protested against the Ecclesiastical Assessment (Scotland) Bill being sent upstairs. The Government intend to remit two other questions to the same Committee. One is the Railway Servants Bill, and that will take a long time. The Factories Bill is also to be remitted to the Standing Committee on Trade, and now there is this Bill to be considered by the same Committee. What in the world are you going to have considered in this House?—for you are sending everything upstairs. It is not as if this House were over-pressed with work. It seemed as if the Government by sending these three important Bills to the Grand Committee on Trade meant to have an excuse for dropping one or more of them. I think everyone in the House will admit that the majority should not be overbearing upon a question of this kind with the minority; and to say that upon an important Agricultural Bill this side should have only four Scotch Members on the Committee upstairs is treating Scotland in a way which is very unfair.

*COLONEL MILWARD (Stratford-upon-Avon): I do not often agree with the views of the hon. Member for Mid Lanarkshire, but I regret that the Government have determined to send this Bill to the Standing Committee on Trade upstairs, because it is a measure which affects largely the agricultural interest generally. It must be admitted that it is a large Bill, and that there are more Members in this House interested in agricultural questions than in any other question. It has been said that it is unnecessary for us to take part in this Second Reading discussion, because we should be discussing simply matters of detail. This Bill is almost entirely concerned with questions of detail, and those questions alone can be dealt with in Committee. The only opportunity, therefore, of pressing Amendments is to get some member of the Committee to move them, and it is impossible that any member of the Committee can take charge of an hon. Member's Amendment and do it the same justice as the hon. Member himself would do. When the Bill returns to the House it is perfectly true that you can put down the same Amendment, but the answer given is invariably, "This matter has been discussed and settled upstairs." It is almost impossible to carry out alterations afterwards, because this answer is so ready and effective, and even those Members who vote in favour of an Amendment upstairs will often vote against it upon Report, in order to act loyally to the Committee upstairs. Under these circumstances I regret that the Government have made up their mind to send the Bill upstairs, because I think it is one of those measures which could be dealt with better in Committee of the whole House.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I desire to say a few words upon this point, because it is a Bill which concerns agriculturists alone, and I represent an agricultural constituency. The right hon. Gentleman is aware of the difficulty which any hon. Member has in persuading the House to make any alterations after the Bill has been threshed out by the Grand Committee. This Bill requires very considerable amendment. It seems to me as if someone had gone through the Bill of 1883 and made pencil notes upon it of the amendments required, and instead of drafting a new Bill the Bill has been reproduced with the pencil notes. Having regard to the importance of this Bill, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not press the motion.

MR. WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Upon this question I wish to add my voice to the opinions expressed by those who have spoken before me. This has been a very technical debate, and the speeches have shown that this measure is dealing with a purely agricultural subject, and it should be left to agricultural Members to decide. If it goes to the

Grand Committee on Trade the agricultural Members representing agricultural constituencies will have very little say in the matter, and I am afraid it will be made into a Bill which will not suit agricultural constituencies. I do ask the Government to reconsider this motion, and give agricultural Members some reasonable chance of moving Amendments.

*MR. LONG: One of the grounds upon which we have been asked to reconsider our determination to refer this Bill to the Standing Committee on Trade is that opportunities may be given to Scottish Members to press forward Scottish interests, of which we have heard a good deal to night. The hon. Member has evidently overlooked the fact that the Committee of Selection have added some fifteen members to the Standing Committee on Trade for the purpose of considering the measures which have been referred to that Committee. I believe it is the most businesslike method of dealing with a measure of this kind to refer it to the Committee upstairs, where the speeches are not so long, and where you get every point considered from a practical point of view. The Government have taken this course with a view of getting forward with the measure, and I do not think this House will be deprived of a reasonable opportunity of introducing Amendments. There might be something said against my proposal if this Bill raised matters of a strictly party and controversial character, but that cannot be said in this case. I hope the House will accept the motion which I have made.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 110; Noes, 35. (Division List No. 101.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Banbury, Frederick George
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John

Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm
Chamberlain. J. Austen (Wo'r
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D
Curzon, Viscount

Dalkeith, Earl of
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt Hn Sir William Hart

Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (Manc'r
Finlay, Sir Robt. Bannatyne.
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis

Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Goschen, Rt Hn G. J. (St George's
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron

Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Houston, R. P.

Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)

Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry

Lawrence, Sir E. Durning-(Corn
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverp'l
Loyd. Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred

Macartney, W. G. Ellison
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Monckton, Edward Philip
More, Robt. J. (Shropshire)
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry

Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian

Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert

Rentoul, James Alexander
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)

Seely, Charles Hilton
Smith, Abel H. (Christchurch)
Smith, J. Parker (Lanarksh.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley

Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray

Webster, Sir Richard E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tauntn
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wyndham, George

Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Fisher.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Crilly, Daniel
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doogan, P. C.
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Kilbride, Denis
Maddison, Fred.
Milward, Colonel Victor
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarth'n
Moulton, John Fletcher
Price, Robert John
Reckitt Harold James
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighsh
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tanner, Charles Kearns
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene
Weir, James Galloway
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Sinclair and Mr. Caldwell.

In pursuance of the Order of the House of the 6th day of this instant April, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned accordingly at five minutes before Twelve of the clock till Thursday, 26th April.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1900—1901).

(FINAL FIGURES.)

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 3 April 1900;—*for*,

COPY of "STATEMENT showing the REVENUE and EXPENDITURE for 1899–1900, and the ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE for 1900–1901."

Treasury Chambers, 4 April 1900. } R. W. HANBURY.

1899—1900.

TABLE I. showing how the Amount issued from the Exchequer to meet the Expenditure in 1899–1900 compares with the Estimated Expenditure, (1) exclusive, and (2) inclusive of War Charges.

1. Exclusive of War Charges.

	1899-1900.				
	Total Expenditure provided for in the Budget.	Additional Expenditure for which Supplementary Estimates were presented.	Total Estimated Expenditure.	Amount issued to meet Total Expenditure.	Exchequer Issues. More (+) or Less (−) than Total Estimated Expenditure.
	£	£	£	£	£
I. CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES.					
1. National Debt Services	23,000,000	—	23,000,000	23,000,000	—
2. Other Consolidated Fund Services	1,603,000	—	1,603,000	1,584,000	— 19,000
3. Payments to Local Taxation Accounts	1,147,000	—	1,147,000	1,150,000	+ 3,000
Total Consolidated Fund Services	25,750,000	—	25,750,000	25,734,000	— 16,000
II. SUPPLY SERVICES.					
1. Army (including Ordnance Factories)	20,617,000	47,000	20,664,000	20,600,000	— 64,000
2. Navy	26,595,000	—	26,595,000	26,000,000	— 595,000
3. Civil Services	22,180,000	698,000	22,878,000	22,530,000	— 348,000
4. Customs	847,000	—	847,000	840,000	— 7,000
5. Inland Revenue	1,966,000	—	1,966,000	1,960,000	— 6,000
6. Post Office	8,553,000	—	8,553,000	8,480,000	— 73,000
7. Telegraph Service	3,638,000	—	3,638,000	3,601,000	— 37,000
8. Packet Service	781,000	—	781,000	760,000	— 21,000
Total Supply Services	85,177,000	745,000	85,922,000	84,771,000	— 1,151,000
GRAND TOTAL (exclusive of War Charges) £	110,927,000	745,000	111,672,000	110,505,000	— 1,167,000

2. Inclusive of War Charges.

	1899—1900.				
	Total Expenditure provided for in the Budget.	Additional Expenditure for which Supplementary Estimates were presented.	Total Estimated Expenditure.	Amount issued to meet Total Expenditure.	Exchequer Issues. More (+) or Less (−) than Total Estimated Expenditure.
	£	£	£	£	£
GRAND TOTAL (as above) -	110,927,000	745,000	111,672,000	110,505,000	— 1,167,000
I. CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES.					
Interest on Treasury (War) Bills- - - - -	—	—	—	217,000	+ 217,000
II. SUPPLY SERVICES.					
Grants to meet War Charges	—	23,000,000	23,000,000	23,000,000	—
GRAND TOTAL (inclusive of War Charges) - - -	110,927,000	23,745,000	134,672,000	133,722,000	— 950,000

In order to show the entire expenditure for which the State was responsible in 1899–1900, there have to be added (1) the expenditure to which the Public Revenue paid into the Local Taxation Accounts is devoted, and (2) the expenditure chargeable to Capital Account. These additions are made in the following statement.

I. Expenditure chargeable against Exchequer Revenue as in above table-	133,722,000
II. Expenditure chargeable against Local Taxation Revenue - - -	9,717,000
	143,639,000
III. Expenditure chargeable against Capital - - - - - - - -	4,847,000
Total - - - - - - - - - - - - -	148,486,000

TABLE II.—Showing how the Exchequer Receipts in 1899–1900 compare with the Budget Estimate and with the Exchequer Receipts of the previous year (1898–99).

Exchequer Receipts in 1898–99.		Budget Estimate for 1899–1900.	Exchequer Receipts in 1899–1900.
£		£	£
20,850,000	Customs - - - - - - -	21,770,000	23,800,000
29,200,000	Excise - - - - - - -	29,850,000	32,100,000
11,400,000	Estate, &c. Duties - - - - -	11,150,000	14,020,000
7,630,000	Stamps - - - - - - -	8,050,000	8,500,000
770,000	Land Tax - - - - - - -	800,000	790,000
1,600,000	House Duty - - - - - -	1,650,000	1,670,000
18,000,000	Property and Income Tax - - -	18,300,000	18,750,000
89,450,000	TOTAL EXCHEQUER RECEIPTS FROM TAXES - - -	91,570,000	99,630,000
12,710,000	Post Office - - - - - - -	13,200,000	13,300,000
3,150,000	Telegraph Service - - - -	3,300,000	3,350,000
430,000	Crown Lands - - - - - -	450,000	450,000
713,000	Receipts from Suez Canal Shares and sundry Loans - - - - -	787,000	834,000
1,883,000	Miscellaneous - - - - - -	1,850,000	2,276,000
18,886,000	TOTAL EXCHEQUER RECEIPTS FROM NON-TAX REVENUE -	19,587,000	20,210,000
108,336,000	**TOTALS** - £	**111,157,000**	119,840,000

TABLE III.—Showing how the Aggregate Revenue raised by the State in 1899–1900 compares with the Aggregate Revenue raised in 1898–9.

	Receipts, 1898–1899.	Receipts, 1899–1900.
	£	£
1. Customs:		
Exchequer	20,850,000	23,800,000
Local Taxation Accounts	204,000	228,000
	21,054,000	*24,028,000*
2. Excise:		
Exchequer	29,200,000	32,100,000
Local Taxation Accounts	5,084,000	5,236,000
	34,284,000	*37,336,000*
3. Estate, &c. Duties:		
Exchequer	11,400,000	14,020,000
Local Taxation Accounts	4,233,000	4,453,000
	15,633,000	*18,473,000*
4. Stamps	7,630,000	8,500,000
5. Land Tax	770,000	790,000
6. Inhabited House Duty	1,600,000	1,670,000
7. Income Tax	18,000,000	18,750,000
TOTAL TAX REVENUE	98,971,000	109,547,000
8. Non-Tax Revenue	18,886,000	20,210,000
AGGREGATE REVENUE raised by the State £	117,857,000	129,757,000
(*a*) For the Exchequer	108,336,000	119,840,000
(*b*) For the Local Taxation Accounts	9,521,000	9,917,000

*The aggregate total of £18,473,000 is exclusive of the sum of £47,000 which was not paid into the Exchequer or into the Local Taxation Accounts; but was devoted, in pursuance of the Act 62 and 63 Vict., c. 17, to relieve owners of tithe rentcharge attached to benefices.

TABLE IV.—Giving the National Balance Sheet of 1899-1900 (1) exclusive and (2) inclusive of War Charges.

1. Exclusive of War Charges.

Revenue.	£	Expenditure.	£
I.—Exchequer Receipts from Taxes (as in Table II.)	99,630,000	I.—Consolidated Fund Services (as in Table I.) - -	25,734,00
II.—Exchequer Receipts from Non-Tax Revenue (as in Table II.) -	20,210,000	II.—Supply Services (as in Table I.) - -	84,771,00
		Total - -	110,505,00
		Surplus - -	9,335,00
Total - -	119,840,000	Total - -	119,840,00

2. Inclusive of War charges.

	£		£
Total Revenue (as above) -	119,840,000	Total Expenditure (as above) - - -	110,505,00
Deficiency - -	13,882,000	Add War Charges :	
		(1) Interest on Treasury Bills - -	217,00
		(2) Army Grants -	23,000,00
Total - -	133,722,000	Total - -	133,722,00

1900—1901.

TABLE V.—Showing how the Provision to be made in the Budget of 1900–1 (according to Estimates presented) compares with the provision made in the Budget of 1899–1900 (1) exclusive, and (2) inclusive of War Charges.

Service.	Provision made in Budget of 1899–1900.	Provision to be made in Budget of 1900–1 according to Original Estimates presented.	More (+) or less (—) than the Budget Estimate for 1899–1900.
1. Exclusive of War Charges.			
I.—CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES.	£	£	£
1. National Debt Services - - -	23,000,000	23,000,000	—
2. Other Consolidated Fund Services -	1,603,000	1,600,000	— 3,000
3. Payments to Local Taxation Accounts	1,147,000	1,150,000	+ 3,000
TOTAL CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES	25,750,000	25,750,000	—
II.—SUPPLY SERVICES.			
1. Army (including Ordnance Factories)	20,617,000	23,703,000	+3,086,000
2. Navy - - - - - - -	26,595,000	27,523,000	+ 928,000
3. Civil Services (Miscellaneous) - -	22,180,000	22,839,000	+ 659,000
4. Customs and Inland Revenue - -	2,813,000	2,833,000	+ 20,000
5. Post Office - - - - - -	8,553,000	8,844,000	+ 291,000
6. Telegraph Service - - - -	3,638,000	3,770,000	+ 132,000
7. Packet Service - - - -	781,000	773,000	— 8,000
TOTAL SUPPLY SERVICES - - -	85,177,000	90,285,000	+5,108,000
GRAND TOTAL (exclusive of War Charges)	110,927,000	116,035,000	+ 5,108,000
2. Inclusive of War Charges.			
	£	£	£
GRAND TOTAL (as above) - -	110,927,000	116,035,000	+ 5,108,000
I.—CONSOLIDATED FUND SERVICES.			
National Debt Services:—			
(1.) Interest on Treasury (War) Bills - - - - - -	—	250,000	+ 250,000
(2.) Interest on War Loan - -	—	619,000	+ 619,000
II.—SUPPLY SERVICES.			
Army (Extraordinary Charges to meet War Expenditure) - - -	—	37,797,000	+37,797,000
GRAND TOTAL (inclusive of War Charges) - - - - -	110,927,000	154,701,000	+43,774,000

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS. SESSION 1900.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

(Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.)

Title of Paper.	Date of Presentation.	Period (after Presentation) to lie upon the Table.
London Government Act, 1899 (Metropolitan Boroughs),—Copy of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Holborn, St. Pancras, and Stepney, and incorporating the Councils thereof, and for other purposes connected therewith [62 and 63 Vic., c. 14, s. 15 (2)]	27 March	30 days
Irish Land Commission (Rules),—Copy of Rule made by the Irish Land Commission under the Land Purchase Acts, dated the 19th March, 1900 [44 and 45 Vic., c. 49, s. 50 (3)]	28 March	100 sitting days
London Government Act, 1899 (Metropolitan Boroughs),—Copy of Drafts of Orders in Council for the establishment of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Chelsea, Finsbury, Kensington, and Paddington, and incorporating the Councils thereof; and for other purposes in connection therewith [62 and 63 Vic., c. 14, s. 15 (2)]	29 March	30 days
Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877,—Copy of Order in Council, dated 31st March, 1900, giving effect to a Rule of Court [40 and 41 Vic., c. 57, s. 69]	3 April	100 sitting days
Board of Education,—Copy of Minute, dated 6th April, 1900, establishing Higher Elementary Schools [33 and 34 Vic., c. 75, s. 97]	6 April	One Month
Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899,—Copy of Regulations for the Appointment of Members of the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction, under The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899 [62 and 63 Vic., c. 50, s. 28]	9 April	40 sitting days

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